Inter-Species Social Behaviour

Why in news?

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Recent scientific study on birds has revealed new insights on inter-species social behaviour among animals.

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What is the recent research on inter-species?

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- Birds of a feather flock together’ is an old adage to explain some well-observed aspects of social behaviour among humans and animals.
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- Social behaviour among animals have been researched for a long time, butwas restricted to focus on intra-species social interactions.
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- This had ledscientists to have a fairly sophisticated understanding of group behaviours.
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- However, relatively less is known about the socialising of certain animals including birds and mammals with individuals of other species.
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- A recent Research by Centre for Ecological Sciences at the Indian Institute of Science in Bengaluru offers new insights on inter-species social behaviour among animals.
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What are the significant revelations of the study?

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- Scientists have tried to get clarity on the difference between mixed-species socialisations and same-species interactions and ascertain the motivation for mixed-species socialising.
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- It was generally thought that in same-species social interactions, all individuals get similar benefits and in mixed-species interactions, different groups get different benefits.
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- But the study revealed that most cases of mixed species socialisation was similar to that of single species groups and the benefits received from both the groups were also similar.
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- Therefore, when the motivation for joining mixed species group rather than same species group were studied, it was found that gaining concrete benefit like having same predator.
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- And quality of such benefit like how soon can an individual spot a predator, were factors for choosing mixed species group.
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- Some birds took into account the cost of competition while deciding whether to join a flock of different species, such as different food habits but share same predator.
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- It was also found that birds considered their flight behaviour and skills while joining another group, so as to coordinate their activities together as a flock.
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- A combination of these and probably more were the motivations behind birds' decision to restrict themselves to flocks of their own species or join other groups.
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- These revelations would be helpful in protecting the species of the interacting group of any cascading effects if the other group of species become extinct or change behaviour.
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Source: Indian Express

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