



The Great Pheromone Myth

Richard L. Doty

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Mammalian pheromones, audiomones, visuomones, and snarks—Richard Doty argues that they all belong in the same category: objects of imagination.

For more than 50 years, researchers—including many prominent scientists—have identified pheromones as the triggers for a wide range of mammalian behaviors and endocrine responses. In this provocative book, renowned olfaction expert Richard L. Doty rejects this idea and states bluntly that, in contrast to insects, mammals do not have pheromones.

Doty systematically debunks the claims and conclusions of studies that purport to reveal the existence of mammalian pheromones. He demonstrates that there is no generally accepted scientific definition of what constitutes a mammalian pheromone and that attempts to divide stimuli and complex behaviors into pheromonal and nonpheromonal categories have primarily failed. Doty's controversial assertion belies a continued fascination with the pheromone concept, numerous claims of its chemical isolation, and what he sees as the wasted expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars by industry and government.

The Great Pheromone Myth directly challenges ideas about the role chemicals play in mammalian behavior and reproductive processes. It is a must-have reference for biologists, psychologists, neuroscientists, and readers interested in animal behavior, ecology, and evolution.

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