

Cultural Daily

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Alternative Natural Facts

Rob Lang · Wednesday, January 25th, 2017

Alternative facts seem to be quite topical nowadays. Let me give you some that I've observed in the natural world.

Did you know that animals sometimes come up with their own alternative facts? Here are a couple of seagulls chattering about alternative astrophysics.

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Sciency!

Sometimes camels can give alternative facts about how their humps are oriented.



This Bactrian (2-humped camel) is so in love with that dromedary (single hump) that he will do anything to win her favor. Do you think she will eventually accept him for who he is? How long will he have to continue the alternative fact charade?

It definitely wasn't the extremely hot sun, or the tequila. The alternative fact is, I witnessed a remarkable adaptation by an extremely endangered animal, the sawfish.



What amazing alternative evidence of an adaptation! And I thought that sawfish females having virgin births was incredible. It seems as though there is nothing that life won't try in order to keep on livin'. If this is successful, they won't have to worry so much about their snouts getting caught up in fishing gear, overfishing of their food or their brackish mangrove nurseries getting developed into beachfront property.

And finally, keeping with endangered species, check out this alternative fact sheet about a charismatic, yet sadly endangered species, the okapi.



I had Snopes look into these so-called “alternative facts” about the endangered okapi. Let’s do a “fact” box-by-box analysis: 1) Their hooves do secrete a smelly, tar-like substance, but no one has ever witnessed them climbing up trees. 2) The zebra stripes do not confuse lots of evolutionary biologists. They serve as an effective camouflage in the dense rainforest. 3) There is no evidence that the okapi uses its extremely long tongue other than to grab leaves.

The real characteristics of this odd creature are sum of about 20 million years of evolution in a small patch of Africa, making it wonderfully adapted to its dense rainforest habitat, which is quickly diminishing.

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