

# Animal Wisdom

Indigenous cultures throughout the world believe that the natural world contains special signs, meaning, and wisdom for humans. While there are many interpretations, the following is a brief summary of what some animals signify.

**Alligator**  primal energies of birth, motherhood, and initiation

**Ant** strength, endurance, efficiency, persistence, productivity, courage, and community

**Badger** aggressiveness, persistence, and power of true strength

**Bat**  blood, rebirth, and navigation—teaches one to “see” with perceptions other than the eye

**Bear** introspection, mystery, and strength— to seek within oneself to find answers; often seen in the “cave of origins” in the dream life

**Beaver** cooperation, alteration, building, shaping security, contentment, industry, and balance; the beaver is one of a few life totems once acquired, it travels with one for life, often in the presence of other totems

**Bee**  service, gathering, and community

**Bird**  all birds represent pieces of the fundamental principles of unity, freedom, community, and soul flight

**Black panther** introspection, seeking within oneself, and to hold power, yet be unseen

**Brown bear** caution, bravery, fairness, organization, curiosity, and leadership

**Buffalo**  prayer, abundance, practical wisdom, healing, and good fortune; the buffalo is one of a few life totems once acquired, it travels with one for life, often in the presence of other totems

**Butterfly** transformation, courage to change, balance, evolution, and how to experience joy

**Cheetah** helps one to focus on goals and to find the most direct way of achieving them

**Chimpanzee**  harmony, engaging in the simple ways of life that create joy

**Cougar** initiative, speed, grace, territoriality, mystery, balanced leadership, cunning, and wit

**Coyote**  this trickster reminds one to laugh at oneself and enforces karmic law; the coyote is one of a few life totems once acquired, it travels with one for life, often in the presence of other totems

**Crane**  longevity, creation through focus, and expression of feminine energies

**Crow**  council, intuitive knowledge of universal sacred law, and assertiveness. The crow is one of a few life totems once acquired, it travels with one for life, often in the presence of other totems

**Deer**  gentleness, sensitivity, grace, alertness, creativity, and heart-spirit connection. The deer is one of a few life totems once acquired, it travels with one for life, often in the presence of other totems

**Dolphin** breath of life, harmony with oneself, surroundings, and others, and deep breathing

**Dove** feminine energies of peace, maternity, prophecy, and promise of future

**Dragon** transformation, ritual, magic, related to the snake; all dragons influence subconscious protection and healing through giving vitality—especially during sickness—and confronting obstacles. There are four kinds of dragons:

**Fire dragon** enthusiasm and courage



## ANIMAL WISDOM, CONTINUED

**Air dragon** inspiration and insight

**Earth dragon** grounding power and self-potential

**Water dragon** inner depth and compassion

**Eagle** limitless, freedom, fearlessness, transcendence, and clarity of vision.

**Elephant** commitment, mind power, physical strength, dedication, and overcoming obstacles



**Elk** stamina; teaches one the best use of one's energy and to follow through until the end



**Falcon** accuracy, rapid progress, and restraint

**Fox** camouflage, stealth, observation, anticipate behavior in advance. cleverness, adaptability



**Frog** cleanses the negative forces away and replenishes the soul with positive force; leaping happily; the frog teaches positive willpower and generates life force



**Giraffe** teaches one to view one's life in a way that is both grounded and expansive

**Gorilla** a confirmation that our endeavors are solid and steady; teaches the importance of staying grounded in all situations and to handle our responsibilities through the use of power of leadership rather than the abuse of physical strength upon the weak



**Grizzly bear** stability, tenacity, healing, introspection, maturity, and leadership; represents raw self-power—both destructive and constructive—and the necessity of self-control; the grizzly bear is one of a few life totems once acquired, it travels with one for life, often in the presence of other totems



**Hawk** teaches one to be observant and to pay attention to what may be overlooked; the messenger from the dream life

**Hippopotamus** teaches one to ground oneself in



order to face and dissolve emotional issues

**Horse** inner power, freedom, and safe movement



**Jackal** trickster and stealer of fire; teaches one to try to see humor and that laughter is one of the spices of life

**Lion** teaches one to be strong and courageous even in the midst of trouble



**Lizard** dreaming; the lizard teaches one the importance of respecting and remembering dreams



**Moose** self-esteem, practical wisdom, joy of accomplishment, strength, spontaneity, and unpredictability

**Mountain lion** leadership, standing firm in power; the lion gives direction and aid when needed



**Ostrich** becoming grounded

**Otter** woman medicine, healing, sensuality, and letting loose of boundaries and limits

**Owl** old wisdom, mystery and vision, magic, omens, insight, and vision in the night

**Peacock** resurrection, wise vision, and watchfulness

**Porcupine** self-protection, memory, security, innocence, and humility

**Quail** group nourishment and protection, protectiveness, and group harmony

**Rabbit** fear; the rabbit teaches self-confidence and how to fears; while what one fears persists, the rabbit teaches one to let it go; while predators are nearby, the rabbit teaches one not to let fear guide one into the open

**Raccoon** teaches how to mask, disguise, and transform oneself, putting asleep the part of oneself that is not needed and awakening the aspect of oneself that is needed; the raccoon represents the magic of dexterity and disguise, strategy from →

## ANIMAL WISDOM, CONTINUED

afar, and moving amongst shadows to achieve the attainment of desires; the raccoon is one of a few life totems once acquired, it travels with one for life, often in the presence of other totems

**Salmon** trust, strength, determination, willpower, loyalty, and tradition. The salmon is one of a few life totems once acquired, it travels with one for life, often in the presence of other totems

**Seal**  tapping the sub-conscious; the seal reminds one how to swim in one's inner being for answers

**Skunk** self-respect, reputation, protection, respect, and secrecy; the skunk represents the original "walk your talk"

**Snake**  transmutation, rebirth, and the sacred spiral

**Snow goose** beauty, tradition, transmission, reception, ceremony, and gregariousness

**Spider**  weaving, hunting, creativity, balance, interconnectivity, and industry

**Tiger**  stress and courage, being bold in the face of danger, caution, appropriate timing, and stealth

**Tortoise**  ancient wisdom, experience, patience, and endurance

**Turtle** mother earth, longevity, and creativity; the turtle is one of a few life totems once acquired, it travels with one for life, often in the presence of other totems

**Whale** record keeper; the whale teaches one to listen within and feel the heartbeat of the universe

**White buffalo** spirituality, selflessness, generosity, hope, and ancient wisdom

**Woodchuck (groundhog)** gathering, preparation, burrowing into the earth, and the power of cycle; the woodchuck is one of a few

life totems once acquired, it travels with one for life, often in the presence of other totems

**Wolf** eliminating weakness, commitment, family loyalty, and teaching skill

**Woodpecker** the power of rhythm and determination; stimulating new rhythms

**Zebra** power, alertness, and community