

What Can They See That I Can't - Or Haven't?

Whenever I come back from a long bushwalk, away from the stress of city life with all of its money problems, heart attacks and political life, there is almost always a cat or some birds that not only greet me with great enthusiasm, but also literally throw themselves at me as though they had known me for all of their lives. At other times, I have communicated, both physically and verbally, with cats at a distance of about twenty metres, more or less.

There was the time I returned from a bushwalk to Natone Hill in Lindisfarne, and my car, which was parked outside a house with a patio. From there, sat a cat, looking in my direction, and as I used feline gestures and verbal language, there was a similar reply, not only once, but also several more times in succession. This is not the first time I have experienced this.

After a 6-hour, 16-kilometre walk at Five Mile Beach, on the other side of the dunes from Seven Mile Beach, I met with about five or six magpies scattered around the picnic ground. It was not as though they were already there, so they must have been sitting in the trees. They certainly weren't in view from farther along the track. Some didn't just fly down and sit on the grass as about half of them did from about two to five metres in distance. One sat on a Koppers log fence about one metre away, another sat on the gravel road, farther still in another direction, but the one that truly fascinated me - even quietly shocked me - was the sizeable fledging (as it looked to be) that sat about 2 inches to the side of my right shoe!

A friend with two dogs had continued on for another ten metres to attend to their needs, leaving me alone for about five minutes. Whatever was inside me at that time over-ruled the sight of two quiet dogs not far away. I thought long and hard, and wondered 'whatever are they looking at', but didn't find an answer within me because I was not aware of any euphoria.



Another time at Natone Hill saw another cat, a Burmese this time, jump into the open boot of my car and thoroughly inspect every part that it could reach without moving equipment around. At Lauderdale, after a beach walk, one cat didn't just greet me from a distance, it actually ran at great speed from across the road to greet me with lots of cuddles.

What do they see that I can't - or haven't?

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