



## Animal Personality

**I knew it all along, and I'll bet you did as well: the animals we share our hearts and homes with have personalities, too.**

*Cherie Langlois*

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"Lively" Lily, a Jacob Sheep, puts her personality on pause for the camera. I knew it all along, and I'll bet you did as well: the animals we share our hearts and homes with have personalities, too.

In fact, according to "They've Got Personality," an article by Cynthia Berger in the February/March 2009 National Wildlife, scientists over the past decade have discovered increasing evidence that creatures from spiders (seriously!) to cranes also possess personalities, or what some researchers call by the more scientific term, "behavior syndromes."

I think "animality" would be a nice compromise, but – whatever – don't you just love being right?

My dictionary defines personality as a person's distinctive character or qualities.

The article's definition says: "the characteristic pattern of thoughts, feelings and behaviors that make a person unique."

Berger describes one experiment where scientists tested how individual octopus reacted to being poked, startled, or offered food.

"Each octopus, it turned out, had a unique, and consistent, set of responses – in other words, a personality," she writes.

Daisy and Pippin share their doggy personalities with Cherie's niece Miranda. Looking around our farm, I see distinctive animal personalities everywhere. Our Coonhound mix Pippin is independent, protective, loving, serious, and lazy (when not sniffing out or chasing furry creatures).

Our terrier/poodle mix Daisy is clingy, excitable, playful, affectionate, and sensitive to the slightest criticism.

On the feline side: Sunshine is the haughty, undisputed king of all he surveys;

Tiger is my sweet but stubborn soul-mate kitty who insists on sitting between me and the computer; and

Bastet is an easy-going, love-everybody cat who has a thing going with our (curious, sociable, amorous) house bunny, Dusty.

Finally, cheery cockatiel Ashley is the epitome of perkiness.

Outside we have Sophie, my mature, strong-willed Quarter Horse and

Our immature Paint Toby, who alternates between engaging and bratty. There's also our goat, moody Laurie Mae, and

Jacob sheep: meek Marigold, lively Lily, shy Shamrock, and meddlesome Maia.

Our Muscovy ducks and chickens also display different personalities, from bold, bossy Hagrid, the big drake, to gentle, friendly Velma, our oldest female duck, to chatty Warbeak, the Barred Rock who likes to help me garden.

As for spiders, well, I honestly haven't spent enough one-on-one time with any to peg their personalities yet. Have



you? (Berger's National Wildlife article>>)

Enjoy your personable animal friends,  
~ Cherie

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