

small objects (chimpanzee, monkey, bushbaby, panda, elephant). 6. Their postures are in some ways, or at some times, rather vertical (chimpanzee, monkey, bushbaby, panda, bear, giraffe).

The more of these points a species can score, the higher up the top ten list it comes. Non-mammalian species fare badly because they are weak in these respects. Amongst the birds, the top favourites are the penguin (0.8 per cent) and the parrot (0.2 per cent). The penguin achieves the number one avian position because it is the most vertical of all the birds. The parrot also sits more vertically on its perch than most birds and it has several other special advantages. Its beak shape gives it an unusually flattened face for a bird. It also feeds in a strange way, bringing its foot up to its mouth rather than lowering its head, and it can mimic our vocalisations. Unfortunately for its popularity, it lowers itself into a more horizontal posture when walking and in this way loses points heavily to the vertically waddling penguin.

Amongst the top mammals there are several special points worth noting. Why, for instance, is the lion the only one of the big cats to be included? The answer appears to be that it alone, in the male, has a heavy mane of hair surrounding the head region. This has the effect of flattening the face (as is clear from the way lions are portrayed in children's drawings) and helps to score extra points for this species.

Facial expressions are particularly important, as we have already seen in earlier chapters, as basic forms of visual communication in our species. They have evolved in a complex form in only a few groups of mammals—the higher primates, the horses, the dogs and the cats. It is no accident that five of the top ten favourites belong to these groups. Changes in facial expression indicate changes in mood and this provides a valuable link between the animal and ourselves, even though the correct significance of the expressions is not always precisely understood.

As regards manipulative ability, the panda and the elephant are unique cases. The former has evolved an elongated wrist bone with which it can grasp the thin bamboo sticks on which it feeds. A structure of this