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8th Days of animal STudies

# BEAR IN MIND

Split, 21–24 October 2026

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The conference will be held live only at the  
**Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Split**  
and it will include three thematic sections:

- 1) **ANIMALS** in general
- 2) **BEARS** in particular
- 3) **MUSIC** and animals

## DEADLINES

ABSTRACTS → [APPLICATION FORM](#)  
01/05/2026

NOTIFICATION  
OF ACCEPTANCE  
15/05/2026

FULL PAPERS  
(on bears, not  
mandatory for  
attending the  
conference)  
01/06/2026

**CONFERENCE FEE:** €80  
**CONTACT:** [jguc@ffst.hr](mailto:jguc@ffst.hr)



## animals in general

During *Days of animal Studies* we examine how non-human animals enrich culture and human-nonhuman interactions and the treatment of nonhumans by humans. One of the conference's main goals is to provide a richer insight into the destructiveness of this treatment and to arouse sensibility and critical thinking regarding the formation of a different approach to animals. The permanent topics of the conference include the following issues:

*the relationship between culture and nature – the role of animals in spiritual culture – biological characteristics of animals – animals in ecosystems and species extinction – the question of the existence and form of culture in animals – animals in art (literature, music, film...) – animals in the imagination and the unconscious – animals in folklore, mythology, and religion – mistreatment and killing of animals – animals in material culture – animal nutrition – the moral status of animals – experimentation on animals – animals in sports and entertainment – animals in education – the legal status of the animal*

This list does not exhaust the possible ways of approaching this topic, just as it does not exclude the interdisciplinary networking of the mentioned issues. We welcome diverse methodological approaches and perspectives. More information on previous *Days of animal Studies* can be found [HERE](#).

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## bears in particular

Twenty years ago, a polar bear named **Knut** was born at the Berlin Zoological Garden. The cub became a tourist attraction, but he also sparked controversy about the purpose of zoos. One hundred and fifty years ago, the Croatian writer **Vladimir Nazor** was born in Postira on the island of Brač. Generations of children were raised on his short story *Brundo the Bear*, which critically examines the consequences of deforestation for wild animals. Zoos and deforestation are both central topics when it comes to wild animals, especially bears, and we want to focus on these issues at this year's *Days of animal Studies*. The topics mentioned earlier can also be applied to bears.

Participants can submit their full paper to the organizers by **June 1, 2026** if it focuses on bears as the central theme of the symposium. If it satisfies the peer-review process, it will be published in the edited book *Bear in Mind*. The book will be published by the association "Petit Philosophy", as a part of the book series *Cultural Zoology*. More information on the book series can be found [HERE](#).

We are pleased to announce the topics for the next two years, as we plan to publish proceedings related to the central theme of the symposium in all future years: **2027 – bees** / **2028 – horses**.

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## music and animals

This panel aims to explore the many ways in which animals appear, resonate, and participate in musical cultures and sonic practices across historical periods and genres. We welcome contributions from a wide range of disciplinary perspectives, including musicology, cultural studies, anthropology, philosophy, media studies, and the field of zoo-musicology. Possible topics include (but are not limited to):

*representations of animals in musical works and lyrics – animal symbolism and metaphor in musical cultures – animal sounds and their musical interpretations – interspecies sound practices – animals in performance, recording, and music technology – ethical and ecological perspectives on animals and music – presence of animals in specific musical genres and scenes*

Following the rich discussions and presentations at previous *Days of animal Studies*, we are currently preparing the edited volume *Metal Animals*, that will be presented at the conference. Building on this initiative, we plan to develop a series of future edited books focusing on particular musical genres (such as Rock Animals, Jazz Animals, Folk Animals, and others). Contributors to this session may therefore also consider the possibility of expanding their conference papers into chapters for these planned publications.

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