

Drunken Butterflies and Inebriated Elephants

Post by “Pacatus” of November 4, 2024 at 12:09 PM

“Even cases of drunk elephants have been observed. What motivates animals to consume a substance that can be harmful, pose a danger, or reduce their ability to handle predators? The study’s authors acknowledge that they are not entirely sure but dismiss the idea of accidental ingestion as the primary cause. Instead, the widespread presence of yeast and ethanol, coupled with genetic adaptations for metabolization, suggests more *deliberate consumption*. ...

““On the cognitive side, ideas have been put forward that ethanol *can trigger the endorphin and dopamine system, which leads to feelings of relaxation* that could have benefits in terms of sociality,’ said Anna Bowland, the first author of the research.”

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[Drunk butterflies and inebriated elephants: Animals also consume alcohol](#)

From non-human primates to beetles, dozens of species intentionally ingest ethanol, and even have special enzymes to metabolize it
english.elpais.com

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/4126-drunken-butterflies-and-inebriated-elephants/?postID=32882#post32882>

(Italics mine.)

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In other words: ***pleasure***. Sometimes pursued beyond healthy bounds – and, for us, individual tastes and tolerances (some people have none) need to be recognized and respected, as well as recognizing that drunkenness is always dangerous and debilitating.

And, of course: “No pleasure is a bad thing in itself: but the means which produce some pleasures [can] bring with them disturbances many times greater than the pleasures.” ([PD08](#))

Bracketed addition mine, based on Don’s analysis and translation here: [RE: Best Translation of PD08 To Feature At EpicureanFriends.com](#)