

Invitation to DK Guest Lecture

The moral rights of wild animals

Prof. Dr. Bernd Ladwig

FU Berlin, Otto-Suhr Institute of Political Science

Wednesday, 13 November 2019 | 13:30 to 15:00
SR 56.11 (Brandhofgasse 5/ 1st floor)

Abstract

Provided that sentient animals have moral rights, what do we owe to wildlife? In the talk, four proposals will be critically examined: Clare Palmer's defence of a laissez-faire intuition regarding wild animals, John Hadley's theory of animal property rights, Sue Donaldson's and Will Kymlicka's conception of wild animal sovereignty, and Alasdair Cochranes idea of inter-species cosmopolitanism. I want to defend the view that, although we have positive as well as negative duties vis-à-vis wild animals, the states of nature in which wild animals are destined to live in, systematically constrain our capacity to respond to their needs and to protect their basic goods. In that regard, the moral rights of wild animals are conceptionally weaker than the rights we owe to other humans as well as to animals kept by humans. However, we ultimately bear the responsibility for respecting states of nature in the first place.