

Hummingbird Wristwatches

When you remember something that happened and where and when it happened, you are using what scientists call episodic memory. Scientists have traditionally thought that such memory was unique to man.

Other scientists suspected that possibly some creatures may have episodic memory. For example, take the hummingbird with its fast metabolism. They need to eat often and remember where reliable sources of nutrition are to be found. At the same time, different flowers regenerate nectar at different rates. Researchers went to the natural habitat of the rufous hummingbird, equipped with some fake flowers and sugar water. The manmade flowers were constructed with reservoirs that could hold the sugar water. Half the flowers were refilled ten minutes after a bird would feed from it, while the other half were refilled twenty minutes after a feeding. Researchers found that the birds quickly learned which flowers were filled at which intervals. They soon returned to the flowers that were filled every ten minutes at ten-minute intervals while they waited twenty minutes in between visits to the other flowers. They noted that the birds did a good job of this even though they were keeping track of eight flowers.

It makes more sense to believe that episodic memory is a sophisticated ability that is a gift from a caring God to those creatures whom He knew would need it.

Psalm 25:6

“Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old.”

Prayer: Father, never let me forget Your love to me through Jesus Christ, Your Son. Amen.

Ref: Science News, “Hummingbirds can clock flower refills.”