

BETWEEN THE LINES | Allen Pierleoni

Some good critter books, starting with a fun one

Animals take center stage in these titles, new on bookstore shelves.

“Why Dogs Are Better Than Cats” by Bradley Trevor Greive, with photos by Rachel Hale (Andrews McMeel, \$19.99, 224 pages): This teaming of clever text with wonderful photos will make dog lovers happy – cat lovers maybe not so much. Backpedaling a bit, Greive “clarifies” that he is “pro-dog, not anti-cat.” In any case, it’s all in good fun.

“The Elephant Whisperer” by Lawrence Anthony (Thomas Dunne, \$24.99, 384 pages): The author, a conservationist in South Africa, shows deep emotion in his memoir about caring for a herd of rogue elephants in a wildlife preserve. One amazing part of the story is how the animals accepted him into their lives.

“On Thin Ice” by Richard Ellis (Knopf, \$28.95, 416 pages): It’s disturbing to learn just how threatened the polar bear is by the effects of global warming and the melting of ice packs. Ellis offers a detailed look at the lifestyle of Earth’s largest predator, pointing out that the bears’ numbers have decreased by half (to 22,000) in only 20 years.

It’s all good

Our guess is you’re always looking for a good book. Here’s a sampling:

“Breathless” by Dean Koontz (Bantam, \$28, 337 pages): The best-selling master of suspense brings together a cast of disparate characters (including dogs) – and a certain amount of enchantment – for a “mystery unfolding high in the Colorado mountains.”

“La’s Orchestra Saves the World” by Alexander McCall Smith (Pantheon, \$23.95, 294 pages): International best-seller Smith sets this story during World War II in England, where a determined woman forms an orchestra that touches the lives of many. Smith appeared in April for The Bee Book Club.

“Too Much Happiness” by Alice Munro (Knopf, \$25.95, 320 pages): Intrigue and manipulation fill the vividly drawn stories in this collection by a Man Booker International Prize winner.

