



# NATURE



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Press Materials: <http://pbs.org/pressroom> or <http://thirteen.org/pressroom>

## ***Nature: Dogs in the Land of Lions***

*Premieres Wednesday, November 21 at 8 pm ET (check local listings)*  
*Streams Thursday, November 22 at [pbs.org/nature](http://pbs.org/nature) and on PBS apps*

### **Synopsis:**

Filmed over two years by cinematographer Kim Wolhuter (*Nature: The Cheetah Children*), ***Nature: Dogs in the Land of Lions*** takes viewers into the heart of an African wild dog family. When lions kill her mate, a wild dog mother called Puzzles suddenly must raise two generations of pups all on her own without the help of a pack. Witness the loyalty and selflessness that sets wild dogs apart from other large, social carnivores in this deeply intimate portrayal of motherhood. But in this unforgiving Zimbabwe wilderness, it turns out the top dogs are the big cats – lions are the wild dogs' ultimate enemies. The young dogs provide some light-hearted moments while discovering the world around them, but as they grow up, they must face these eternal enemies on their journey to independence.

### **Long TV Listing:**

Follow the unforgettable journey of a close-knit family of wild dogs in Zimbabwe and witness rarely seen behavior, from tender moments with newborn pups, to the thrills of hunting wildebeest, to close encounters with their greatest enemy - the lion.

**Short TV Listing:**

Follow a close-knit family of wild dogs growing up in a land ruled by lions.

**Running Time:** 60 minutes

**Noteworthy Facts:**

- The African wild dog population in the Malilangwe Wildlife Reserve in Zimbabwe has been devastated by a rabies epidemic in recent years. Puzzles and her partner Jigsaw are one of only about 700 breeding pairs alive today.
- Lions in the reserve will go out of their way to kill wild dogs because they both hunt the same animals. The dogs' only defense is to avoid lions at all times.
- Few things provide as much family entertainment as hyena hazing. Although rivals for one another's kills, dogs enjoy hounding hyenas whenever they get a chance. The hyenas seem to grin and bear it.
- Wild dogs can reach up to 40 miles an hour while running and hunting.
- Setting wild dogs apart from other carnivores is their willingness to sacrifice almost anything for their pack, a behavior wired into their DNA.

**Buzzworthy Moments:**

- In the beginning, an African wild dog mother named Puzzles must care for her nine young pups. Her partner Jigsaw must do the hunting for the family while Puzzles weans the pups. After a year, they have another dozen children. Nursing these pups triples her required calorie intake, but she can't hunt while tethered to the den. Older sisters Dakota and Atom also try to help look after the newborns. Puzzle's survival and that of her tiny pups rests solely on Jigsaw and their older litter's ability to provide food for the family.
- One early hunting trip ends in devastation. Noticing that Jigsaw and Atom do not return to the den, Puzzles leaves for the first time in months to search for them. She finds them close by, dead from a lion attack. Puzzles must now raise 20 puppies on her own.
- To increase the litter's chances for survival, Puzzles takes her family to a safer part of the reserve. Most of the young pups become too exhausted during the journey, so Puzzles must carry them one by one to their new home. The older pups start to hunt on their own, led by eldest brother Jet.
- Eventually, the pups are old enough to leave the den. As they cross the wilderness over the next few months, the pups learn more about their environment and discover

new creatures, including elephants, giraffes, and impala. They continue to hunt successfully and even manage to snag a wildebeest calf. Puzzles has done the impossible – she has raised nearly all of her offspring into a thriving pack.

- A year after the lions killed Jigsaw, his loss still affects Puzzles. A chance for revenge comes one day when the dogs encounter a fresh carcass. A few lions are feasting, however the pack decides to chance stealing this kill. Their boldness outrages the lions but the big cats are outnumbered by the large family. Puzzles and her young army stand their ground and enjoy a rare victory against their greatest enemy.

### **Series Overview:**

**Nature** is a voice for the natural world, bringing the wonders of wildlife and stories of conservation to millions of American viewers. **Nature** has won more than 700 honors from the television industry, the international wildlife film communities and environmental organizations, including 18 Emmys and three Peabody Awards.

### **Production Credits:**

**Nature** is a production of THIRTEEN PRODUCTIONS LLC for WNET and PBS. For **Nature**, Fred Kaufman is Executive Producer. Bill Murphy is Series Producer and Janet Hess is Series Editor. **Dogs in the Land of Lions** is a production of HAT CREEK PRODUCTIONS, MAVELA MEDIA and THIRTEEN PRODUCTIONS LLC for WNET, in association with TERRA MATER FACTUAL STUDIOS. The documentary is produced by Adrian Bailey and Kim Wolhuter. Directed and written by Robyn Keene-Young. Edited by Adrian Bailey. Cinematography by Kim Wolhuter. Original Music by Bleeding Fingers Music. J. Weldon McNutt is scientific consultant. Tom Harges is narrator.

### **Underwriters:**

Support for this **Nature** program was made possible in part by the Arnhold Family in memory of Clarisse Arnhold, Sue and Edgar Wachenheim III, the Kate W. Cassidy Foundation, the Lillian Goldman Charitable Trust, Kathy Chiao and Ken Hao, the Anderson Family Fund, the Filomen M. D'Agostino Foundation, Rosalind P. Walter, the Halmi Family in memory of Robert Halmi, Sr., Sandra Atlas Bass, the Sun Hill Family Foundation, by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and by the nation's public television stations.

### **Websites:**

[pbs.org/nature](http://pbs.org/nature)

[facebook.com/PBSNature](https://facebook.com/PBSNature)

[twitter.com/PBSNature](https://twitter.com/PBSNature)

[instagram.com/pbsnature](https://www.instagram.com/pbsnature)

[youtube.com/naturepbs](https://www.youtube.com/naturepbs)

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### **About WNET**

WNET is America's flagship PBS station and parent company of [THIRTEEN](#) and [WLIW21](#), home to [ALL ARTS](#). WNET also operates [NJTV](#), the statewide public media network in New Jersey. Through its broadcast channels, three cable services (THIRTEEN PBSKids, Create and World) and online streaming sites, WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to more than five million viewers each week. WNET produces and presents such acclaimed PBS series as [Nature](#), [Great Performances](#), [American Masters](#), [PBS NewsHour Weekend](#), the new nightly interview program [Amanpour and Company](#) and a range of documentaries, children's programs, and local news and cultural offerings. WNET's groundbreaking series for children and young adults include [Get the Math](#), [Oh Noah!](#) and [Cyberchase](#) as well as [Mission US](#), the award-winning interactive history experience. WNET highlights the tri-state's unique issues and culture through [NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams](#) and [MetroFocus](#), [NYC-ARTS](#), [Treasures of New York](#), [Theater Close-Up](#), and [WLIW Arts Beat](#). WNET creates online-only programming, including the award-winning series about gender identity, [First Person](#). Through multi-platform initiatives [Chasing the Dream: Poverty and Opportunity in America](#) and [Peril and Promise: The Challenge of Climate Change](#), WNET showcases the human stories around these issues and promising solutions. The weekly program [SciTech Now](#) explores the nexus of new ideas in science and technology. Through [THIRTEEN Passport](#) and [WLIW Passport](#), station members can stream new and archival THIRTEEN, WLIW and PBS programming anytime, anywhere.

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