




Discovering Nature

Directed by: Various
Produced by: SD Cinematografica
Duration: 11x30'
Versions: 
Format: SD

Today it is still possible to discover remarkably uncontaminated territories barely touched by development, even in populous and industrialised countries. Territories which are home to animals which are unique in the world, whose habits and ecology are often still little known.



Episodes:

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Episodes



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The king of the Sardinian forest

The Sardinian red deer (*Cervus elaphus corsicanus*), an indigenous Sardinian-Corsican subspecies of the Red deer, has for some time been on the list of animal in danger of extinction. It has completely disappeared from Corsica but is present in Sardinia in several circumscribed areas. These hoofed animals live in various types of natural environments. In the highlands in the southern part of the island, they live in thick brushwood and woods. Along the western coast the animal has established itself in more open areas extending as far as the splendid dunes of the Piscinas coast. The Sardinian red deer is a social species with the females and young deer forming into small groups, while the male adults, who are generally solitary, gather into herds only during the mating season. The latter occurs earlier in Sardinia than on the mainland, reaching its climax during the month of September when the woods and brushwood echo with the cries of the males. The young are born in the spring when the luxuriant vegetation offers rich grazing lands that facilitate milking the fawns. Each year, especially in the spring and summer, researchers and volunteers control, study and take a census of the deer population. As a result of the protection they enjoy and the intense fight against poaching, the Sardinian population has grown to 3.000. But this does not mean that the Sardinian red deer can be considered out of danger.



Love calls

One of the most spectacular moments of animal communication is without doubt courtship. Competition and often fights between males bent on conquering the female. The courtship takes place in every species according to precise rules, which are contained in a ritual of movements, sounds and display. All the rites of courtship have been filmed, the spectacular ceremonies and behaviour, during the cycle of love of some species of animals: the mammals, where its all a game, where its a fight, the reptiles, who fix each other in immobile staring matches before combining in a veritable "knot of love"; the inhabitants of the submerged world which improvise a love dance, and last but not least, the birds, for whom the colour of the plumage and particular capacities of mimicry, constitute a language which is both finely structured, but also spectacular, for anyone who has the fortune to see it. Once more, the continuation of the species has been assured, and on the mountain, in the dead of night, a deer continues to sing it's love song to the moon...



Undesired guests

Rome, Termini Station, an area with a thousand problems. In winter a million and a half birds create another one. They are starlings («STURNUS VULGARIS» for ornithologists) who, with their droppings, terrorize the Roman citizens they soil clothes, dirty the pavements and provoke car accidents. Rome Town Council in cooperation with LIPU has experimented with innovative systems for removing the birds. It is the first time that such action has been taken in a great European city. After more than half a century perhaps the Romans will no longer see the coreographic flights which the flocks of birds perform in the skies of the Eternal City every year.



Swedish winter

A journey through the Swedish subarctic winter, discovering the rarefied silence of Vindelfjallen snowy mountains (at the border between Sweden and Norway) and the protected animals living in the homonymous preserve - the largest in Europe - including lynxes, elks, reindeers, and arctic wolves. The life of such animals is intertwined with the problematic relationship between Lapps - the native inhabitants of that area - and the Swedish settlers, who arrived at the beginning of this century. Ice fishing practice is a typical example of the extreme character of human relation with nature, while the extraordinary world of sledge dogs - link between wolves and dogs, through the evolution of the Siberian and Alaskan Huskies - witnesses the value of the fellowship between men and animals. The background is an uncontaminated nature, one of the last green "lungs" in Europe, perpetually snow-covered, and hibernated under a thick layer of ice, at a temperature falling even at 30 degrees below zero. As soon as the first sign of a tardy spring begins to be felt, the scenery changes, snows melt away, and the crystalline waters of the rivers begin to rush headlong again ...



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Surprises of winter

When snow covers the countryside, the whole country becomes magical and is transformed into one vast National Park ranging from the Alps to Etna. When this silent, white blanket falls, it may seem that everything is dormant. Yet, here and there, the calls of alpine chough and chamois, wolves and chaffinches, ibex and griffon, eagles and lynx and many other woodland animals transform the wintry desolation into a great natural concerto. Our documentary crosses ten national parks the length and breadth of Italy, listening to the voice of each of these animals as they narrate their relationship with the winter chill.



The forest of the lynx

A feline of the Italian Alps. Reality or legend? For the very first time this film documents the existence of the lynx in the cold Friuli region, in northeastern Italy. We will follow a pool of researchers who have been studying its behavior and habits for 10 years, in Switzerland.



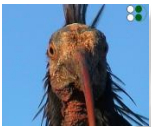
The return of the chamois

High altitude is the kingdom of the Abruzzo chamois. Disappeared from the Majella more than a century ago at the hands of unscrupulous hunters, this beautiful animal risked its extinction in Italy. Today, in the Abruzzo National Park, there are many packs constituted by hundreds of individuals, therefore the Abruzzo Park managers decided to promote the transfer of some of these animals in the other mountain chains in Abruzzo.



Never cry wolf!

Covering all the Apennine chain through the years, the wolf reached the Maritime Alps and from here it seems determined to conquer the whole Alpine arch once again. After the ancient fight between men and wolves, today the mood has changed and the wolf is now protected by several National laws.



Ahmed and the return of the Arab Phoenix

In a land of wind and legends, a long forgotten myth is about to take wing again. The Bald Ibis, the Arab Phoenix of the desert is back, re-discovered in a remote valley in the Syrian steppe by an Italian researcher and a group of Bedouins. Ahmed and the Return of the Arab Phoenix is the story of a handful of visionary men who are fighting in the desert to protect what is left of the biodiversity of Al Badia, the semi-arid desert steppe stretching from the Iraqi border to almost the Mediterranean coast. Their efforts will be rewarded by the discovery, in a remote area, of the last Middle Eastern breeding colony of the Bald Ibis (*Geronticus eremita*) in the wild, one of the rarest migratory birds and a symbol of wisdom for the Bedouins of the desert... Shot around the Palmyra oasis, Syria, not far from the Euphrates river and the Iraqi border, this documentary shows the efforts of the Syrian government to protect its natural heritage.



The brown bear

The last population of Brown Bears of the Apennines, in Central Italy, consists of less than 50 individuals which inhabit a magnificent environment of mountains, streams and beech wood protected in large parks. The bears are active by night, but some of them, tameless, changed their attitude towards the human beings and visit by day villages and farmhouses to steal food.



A good land for the bear

The film deals with the efforts of Italian Forestry Rangers in Italy to protect the last Bears, which are killed by poachers and by shepherds who put poison baits to kill predators in order to protect their sheep. It is a strong battle, fought day by day in the magnificent mountains in Central Italy.



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