

Nat Geo WILD's Big Cat Month highlights rarely seen behaviours in a jam-packed lineup in February

Issued by [The Walt Disney Company Africa](#)

29 Jan 2019

Nat Geo WILD's ninth annual big cat event packs in five new premieres over the month of February 2019, featuring surprising behaviours and inspiring stories of big cats around the world. Every year the channel shines a light on these majestic creatures to remind people of their struggle and their importance in our world



The month starts with Dereck and Beverly Joubert's ***Birth of a Pride*** which follows the extraordinary journey of lions returning to a reserve in Botswana as they grow from a single female and her cub into a fully formed, majestic hunting pride. Next up, ***Leopard Kingdom*** tells the tale of Karula the leopard, who ruled her South African kingdom for over a decade, and the struggles among her successors.

Showcasing rarely seen behaviour in ***Man vs. Puma***, host Boone Smith observes pumas hunting penguins in Patagonia. ***Clash of the Tigers*** follows the extraordinary tale of a strong-willed mother tiger who risks everything to rear her young cubs, and ***Regime of the Queen*** puts a spotlight on the role of the lioness in a pride.

"We are looking forward to a roaring **Big Cat Month** this year, showcasing the world's fiercest felines, in visually inspiring specials created by world-renowned filmmakers, that highlight the plight of big cats, many of which live right here in Africa," said Evert van der Veer, Vice President, Fox Networks Group: Africa.

More than a television event, **Big Cat Month** is an extension of the Big Cats Initiative, a long-term commitment by the National Geographic Society to halt the decline of big cats in the wild. This global programme actively supports on-the-ground research and conservation projects to protect the planet's top felines. For more information on the Big Cats Initiative and how you can get involved, visit NatGeoBigCats.org.



Big Cat Month lineup

Birth of a Pride

Premieres 3 February at 18h00

In Selinda, Botswana, lions had been hunted to near extinction but, thanks to conservation, the number of lions has grown from two to over 60. Witness an incredible and heartwarming story of survival through the eyes of the lions that beat the odds. Follow six cubs as they navigate the world and learn to hunt, socialise and survive in the now flourishing wilderness.

Tree Climbing Lions

Premieres 3 February at 18h45

Big cat biologist Alexander Brackowski is on a mission. He's got 90 days to count lions in Uganda and learn how the population is doing. But these aren't ordinary lions. The prides in Queen Elizabeth National Park spend most of their lives up in the trees, a rare and mysterious behavior unique to this part of Africa. On his journey, he'll witness mothers battling the odds to raise cubs through their first year of life, and the threats tree climbing lions face as the human population expands. Alex's experience will become more personal than he could have imagined, and he'll learn that saving lions can be about much more than counting cats.

Leopard Kingdom

Premieres 10 February at 18h00

Karula, the Queen of Djuma, reigned over South Africa's Sabi Sand Reserve for over a decade. Throughout her rule she endured droughts, attacks on her territory, and staved off hunger. She had three suitors, six cubs, and five grand-cubs. Her kingdom was strong, but now she is gone. Between Thandi, Shadow, and Xongile - three of Karula's eldest daughters - a new queen will take the throne. But when an interloper finds his way into their domain and aims to take the throne for himself, will the sisters put family first?

Leopard Huntress

Premieres 10 February at 18h45

When a vicious fight with the Male leopard results in her cub's death, Malika must reinvent herself after the loss. In the battle to survive she faces dangerous enemies and must hunt way outside her comfort zone. Her desperation inspires ingenious new ambush techniques and each success slowly rebuilds her confidence till she has the courage to face her enemies and regain her former glory.

Clash of the Tigers

Premieres 17 February at 18h00

Two royal Bengal tigers in Ranthambore, India, are sisters, natural born killers, granddaughters of the most famous queen tiger in the world and heirs to her magnificent throne. They live in a paradise that is one of the last tiger sanctuaries on Earth. And they want only one thing: to remove their mother, destroy the other sister and reign supreme. This is their story.

Man vs. Puma

Premieres 24 February at 18h00

Big cat expert Boone Smith travels to Patagonia to observe pumas thriving in the wild under increased conservation efforts. The cats have not learned to fear humans, making this the one area in the world where people can observe their behaviour

up close. Once there, Boone is fascinated to watch the pumas hunting penguins, an incredibly rare behaviour. The tables are turned when a big cat starts to stalk HIM and he comes face to face with a hungry mother on the hunt.

Regime of the Queen

Premieres 24 February at 18h45

The lion is the king of beasts but it is the lioness that is the real power behind the throne. She is 135 kilograms of predator, part of a pride that forms family groups that work together to strike down prey and ferociously patrol the boundaries of their territory. The lioness will let nothing threaten her family's rule. Through creating alliances and ruthlessly eliminating enemies, the land is hers to rule.

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