

Echo And The Elephants Of Amboseli

13 X 30 MINUTES

EPISODIC BREAKDOWN

1. The Dangerous Dry Season

Echo lives in Southern Kenya alongside 1,500 other wild African elephants. Below Kilimanjaro, no rain has fallen. There's no grass to eat, so Echo must find food for her hungry family. She must avoid predators, fierce Maasai warriors, and disasters such as the treacherous mud that has trapped Qualida, another elephant matriarch.

2. Threat to a Leader

Norah and Soila race to Amboseli's outlands to help rescue Qualida, an elephant matriarch trapped in mud. In her secret spot, Echo wakes to face a rebellion: half her family leave to eat at the palms. After four hours trekking through dry bushland, the incoming waves of thirsty elephants from the surrounding hills are nearing water. But trouble with the Maasai begins to boil over...

3. Calves in Trouble

In Amboseli, Soila and Katito take to the air to find Qualida, the elephant rescued from the mud trap. They spot her, but can't make out her calf. On its own, it will stand little chance of survival. In matriarch Alison's family, Alicia is struggling to feed her new-born calf. Around Echo's family, lions are threatening the young, but when they lay an ambush after dark, the feisty great-grandmother goes on the attack.

4. Surviving the Drought

In Amboseli, the harsh drought is tightening its grip. Echo and all the elephant families go to sleep and wake up hungry. Rain is falling, but in dangerous areas, drawing elephants into increasing conflict with farmers. Luckily Sinya, the calf that fell in the well is recovering at the orphanage in Nairobi.

5. Saved by the Rains

On the plains of Amboseli, the rains are over two months late. Echo brings the family to the palms to eat the last leaves. The wise matriarch resists the temptation to take them to inhabited areas where fresh crops are springing up and conflict waits. But young bulls on their own are running into trouble...

6. Playtime

In the relentless drought, the youngest calves are starving. Hunger is driving elephants to forage on surrounding farms. Echo's wise head keeps her family to the swamp. Rains arrive, but after five days, the much-needed downpours dwindle to sparse showers. Echo must bring the family through the long ordeal without loss, but it might be harder said than done.

7. Clash of the Titans

The rains bring new life. Lush new grass is saving the 58 elephant families from hunger. An extraordinary annual reunion brings hundreds of elephants together in scenes of celebration, play and romance. Meanwhile, big bull Vronsky is on the hunt for a mate and ready to fight. He begins an epic battle with a rival, Gomer, starting by fighting for nine hours without a break.

8. The Drama of Big Ed

In Amboseli, nine months of unrelenting drought have given way to longed-for rains. The elephants now have enough to eat. Echo is taking the family on a day out to the Snipe River. Isaiah's spear wound needs urgent treatment. But the elephants are ruining new crops. A new idea could put an end to their destruction: it's based on a simple piece of string.

9. Cynthia's Choice

After months of hunger, Echo's family are enjoying good times. The matriarch and her family are dustbathing at the safe home where Echo shelters her young. Even when they run to defend themselves, they are only pretending to be attacked! This is the time when magnificent males such as Keyhole reappear. His arrival excites Echo's whole family. But around him, Amboseli's finest bulls battle to breed.

10. Calves on the Edge

Echo's family have their first new baby of the year, Evaline. The baby looks unusually exhausted, because Elettra, the first-time mother won't let her sleep. After three days, the longest battle of the bulls Amboseli's ever seen enters the record books. By the end of it, Vronsky will be able to mate with Dorie.

11. Triumph and Disaster

It's the baby boom. In Echo's family, her niece Elettra is a mother for the first time. She has a lot to learn. Three day-old baby Evaline finds the going tough, as her mother fails to watch over her, and the others send the adventurous youngster packing. Isaiah's leg wound becomes re-infected, and he needs the vet again.

12. War at the Waterhole

For Echo and her family, the weeks after the rains are good times. They have time to take a mudbath together. Baby Evaline is a handful, and new mother Elettra still hasn't learnt to stay close to her. Echo's unpopular granddaughter Edwina breaks away and gives birth, but lions teach Edwina how hard it is to bring up a calf without the protection of the family.

13. Death Walks on the Grassland

The young Echo travels with her family, keeping close to her mother, from whom she absorbs lessons passed down through generations. In her teens she practises courtship and mating. Despite her best efforts, her first baby dies in a drought. And, in her mid-twenties, her life changes forever as she becomes the family's leader.