

off the fence.

Life Stories

11 x 60'

EPISODIC BREAKDOWN

1. Caring for Life

Taking care of one's children is one of the hardest jobs in the world. There are times when you can almost understand that some animals don't take care of their offspring at all. Vultures oblige their young to leave the nest, spiders do their best not to eat them, while snakes do not care at all for their offspring.

2. Fighting for Life

Living means struggling and fighting. It means winning and losing many battles, both big and small. This struggle affects everyone and everything: fights over food, over territory, or for love. Nevertheless, violence in nature is often just a ritual that follows a protocol, a set of rules and formalities that almost always prevents serious injuries. But not always...

3. Dressing for Life

During their lives, animals spend tonnes of time taking care of their personal appearance. They scratch, lick, powder themselves, or comb their feathers and take baths for hours, every day. This personal hygiene can establish incredible frameworks for relationships, sometimes creating lifelong friends.

4. Eating for Life

Animal's diets have evolved in such amazing ways. Snakes don't eat much, some can go without food for a whole year, but when they get to it, they can swallow preys many times bigger than their heads. Some species have the opposite strategy: ruminants never stop eating, but they have to secrete more than 100 litres of saliva a day!

5. Loving for Life

The strategies that wildlife use to reproduce are hugely varied. Sometimes starfish are simply broken into pieces, while aphids can be born from an unfertilized egg. There are animals that spend their whole lives with one mate, others that are only faithful to their partner some of the time, and still others that are already breaking up when they've just met.

6. Lying for Life

Animals employ techniques of deceit to hunt or to escape from those who hunt them, some so sophisticated they can be considered lies. Animals' shapes and behaviour have evolved in surprising ways, turning them into living traps. The ant lion, alligator turtle, bombardier beetle and the anglerfish, use lures, disguises or even hi-tech constructions to survive.

7. Building for Life

The most common relationship among living beings is that predator and prey. But it's not the only one. There are non-violent relationships, and many more that we could consider to be cooperative and beneficial for both sides. Nonetheless, friendship is always beneficial: food, free transportation, or protection are the tradable; the things that make them friends for life.

8. Friends for Life

Not many animals live in houses, and even fewer know how to build a nest or a den. The majority simply make use of natural holes or the homes of others, those extraordinary animals able to weave plant fibres, shape clay, or design labyrinths against predators and floods. Making traps is even more complex and unusual.

9. Talking for Life

Human language and the forms of communication of animals are separated by such an enormous abyss that probably no other species will ever cross that gap. Nonetheless, the beautiful, complex, and diverse mechanisms that evolution has designed to allow species to transmit and receive messages are fascinating. Using almost all the senses – hearing, touch, smell, and sight – living beings convey information.

10. Behaviour for Life: Life Stories Special

Fighting, communicating, building, loving, caring for children, and simply hunting, eating, and dressing up are some of the basic animal behavior that we're going to see in this series. Life Stories full of passion, violence, and tenderness will reveal to us many of our neighbors on the planet, some of them little-known and all of them surprising, magnificent, no matter what their size or reputation. This is the way they behave to survive.

11. Sleeping for Life

Sleep is as crucial as eating and even more urgent than thirst. This biological aspect remains largely unknown and unsettling.

Do all living beings sleep? It may seem that they do, but some sleep for just a few seconds at a time, while others spend more than 90% of their lives in a state of unconsciousness, and some animals even dream.

There are amazing sleep practices, shrews cannot sleep more than three or four hours or they die of starvation. That is why they fight so fierce for every piece of food! Swifts fly never stopping or resting. They eat or preen in the air, mate in the air and sleep on the wing... A six eyed spider can stay still for months but it is always ready to hunt as soon as prey appears. Snakes never close their eyes, do they sleep watching around? Dolphins speak while sleeping, and as whales, they have to remember to breath, how do they do?

Very few animals sleep for eight hours at a time, with their eyes closed, in the same spot, nearly always at night. But of course sleep is not mainly for resting, we grow, avoid illness, synchronize neurons and reinforce memory when our brain is in REM mode...