

## World's Wildest City: Anchorage

13 x 30 Minutes

### EPISODIC BREAKDOWN

#### 1. City of Dogs

Bred from wolves, Huskies have helped humans carve out an existence in Alaska's desolate wilderness. These dogs still maintain many physical adaptations of their wild ancestors, enabling them to withstand the fierce conditions of the Alaskan winter. And in Alaska's most extreme terrain, sled dogs are still the only form of transport. In the south, the modern city of Anchorage is still home to the start of the World's Toughest Race, a 1000 mile sled-dog race, known as the Iditarod. But in this wild city, there's another canine running wild on the city streets 24 hours a day. Drawn in by the constant supply of food, urban coyotes cannot resist the sights and smells of Anchorage. Highly elusive, no-one knows how many coyotes live in Anchorage. But their powerful sense of smell, and razor sharp hearing enables them to thrive, on the many opportunities to find food in this city.

#### 2. Caribou: Extreme Survivors

There are more Caribou in Alaska than people! Across the Arctic, they're the lifeblood of many remote communities. But human expansion, and wild predators, have led to their rapid decline. Out on the tundra, Caribou are the prey of choice for Alaska's carnivores, and at a ranch on the edge of Anchorage, the reindeer are at constant risk from the area's wolves and brown bears. The people of Anchorage have vowed to protect them, but will their help be enough for the Caribou to survive? Since 1935, each February, Anchorage plays host to the Fur Rendezvous, a festival to celebrate the end of the long Alaskan winter, and the animals that have enabled humans to survive the Arctic extremes. One of the most anticipated events is the Running of the Reindeer. Thousands of residents and tourists gather to race down the city's 4th Avenue, in fancy dress, while being chased by a herd of reindeer.

#### 3. City Lynx

One of Alaska's most secretive and efficient predators, Lynx are usually highly elusive... but in Anchorage, houses are being built in the Lynx's territory, forcing these usually shy big cats, to find new ways to survive on the streets. As this urban jungle continues to expand into the wilderness, encounters between people and wild Lynx are on the rise. In this wild city, can people live side by side with Alaska's deadliest big cat? When it comes to dealing with a dangerous animals on private property in Anchorage, there's only one man to call, nuisance wildlife officer, Robert Doran.

Today he is investigating suspicious animal tracks in one of the city's most exclusive housing developments. On the edge of Anchorage, the Alaska Zoo provides a sanctuary for any injured or orphaned Lynx found in the city. Senior keeper Beth has hand-raised Tony since he was brought in to the Zoo as a kitten.

#### **4. Bald Eagle Rescue**

In Anchorage, one bird rules the roost...the Bald Eagle. Expert hunters, they are perfectly adapted to life in tough arctic conditions, but in Anchorage, the secret to their survival... is trash. Every day, hundreds of bald eagles gather at the city dump, dodging trucks, machinery, and even pyrotechnics, in search of an easy meal. But this city life also brings constant danger, for the eagles themselves, and also for the human residents. The dump is located close to 2 airports, and a US air force base, and planes colliding with eagles, have now caused a number of fatal air crashes. So Anchorage's residents and bird conservationists are joining forces to find an answer, but in this Wild City, can they save America's national bird?

#### **5. Wolves on Main Street**

For years, at least four highly elusive wolfpacks have lived and hunted on the edge of the wild city of Anchorage. But as the city spreads further and further into wolf country, the wolves are now getting bolder, and attacks on humans are on the increase. A group was recently targeted whilst jogging with their dog on a trail near one of the city's main roads. But despite the dangers posed by these urban wolfpacks, many residents are fighting to protect the wolves, that roamed this area long before the city was built. Alaska Zoo provides a permanent home to five wild-born wolf pups, that would otherwise have been culled by hunters. By understanding the wolves' social hierarchies, they've actually been able to form a bond with these usually feared animals. Keeper Tim Lescher is now even able to enter the enclosure with these wild born predators. But as man and beast increasingly come face to face...can the people of Anchorage find a way to protect the city's deadliest and most iconic wild predator.

#### **6. Bears Behaving Badly**

Anchorage is home to hundreds of black bears. And it's these black bears, that are patrolling the city. With their brains, their brawn and their cunning, these bears have mastered life in this urban jungle. When Spring arrives the bears hit the city as it's time to start eating. And these bears have found a source of food that is much easier to catch than a slippery salmon - it's trash. And it is everywhere. The city's bins and dumpsters have become the perfect bear restaurant. But with people and black bears coming into contact more and more are the bears risking their lives in their hunt to find food.

#### **7. Beaver Lumberjacks**

Anchorage has a rather unique resident who is renowned as nature's lumberjack and North America's largest rodent, the beaver. With their powerful teeth the trees they fell can be huge and their dams can be so enormous they can be seen from space. But since humans arrived here, many beavers have been forced to live in an urban jungle! And as the Wild City of Anchorage expands, that means more people, more cars, and the biggest risk to the beavers, dogs! But these unique animals have found a way to thrive, even in the city. There is one problem though, their incredible building abilities can cause problems for the city's residents. Luckily for them one man is on a mission to live alongside the beavers whatever the cost.

## 8. Downtown Porcupines

Anchorage is home to a huge number of wild porcupines, living in the city's parks, gardens and streets. Almost twice the average size, Anchorage's porcupines search for food here in the city, and find refuge during the bitter Alaskan winters. But life on the streets also takes its toll. Porcupines are the city's number one roadkill. In the wild, few animals other than wolves attempt to kill porcupines, and in the city, domesticated dogs can be as big a threat to the porcupines as wild wolves. But as the one dog owner finds out, attacking a porcupine never ends well for the dog!

## 9. Brown Bears and Salmon

When Spring comes one animal arrives in its thousands. It's the salmon. Travelling an incredible 3500 miles through rivers and streams they are Alaska's hardiest resident. Using their muscular bodies they can swim up stream jumping over any obstacle that comes in their way. But there is one grizzly hazard they face right at the end of their journey. It's the brown bears. These expert fishermen use skill and accuracy to grab onto the salmon with their powerful teeth. And after the harsh winter, this is a long awaited delicious meal for the bears. But it isn't just bears hunting salmon... the people are too. With salmon running right into the heart of the city Anchorage is a hot spot for fishermen hoping to land a prize catch..... but with around 60 brown bears roaming the city, also on the hunt for these urban fish, conflicts are on the increase.....

## 10. Moose Mayhem

This unique arctic city is home over 2000 moose! And these notorious animals are running riot... Crossing busy highways, giving birth in backyards, and even doing battle, right here in suburbia! But life on the streets is fraught with danger...and in this expanding city, more highways mean more moose deaths. But the people of Anchorage are on a mission, to protect the most iconic animal in this Wild City. Unfortunately this comes with its challenges though, as these animal can reach over 1300lbs and a mother moose is one of the most protective animals on earth where they will do anything to protect their calves. But no matter what trouble the moose get themselves into everyone is always happy to see them and every Anchorage resident has their own unique moose story to tell.

## 11. Baked Alaska

This city spends most of the year encased in ice...but when summer hits, Anchorage bursts into life. Animals and plants living this far north have been forced to adapt, working faster to make the most of the short season, but these animals built to withstand Alaska's extreme winters, often struggle in Anchorage's summer heat! Temperatures can be surprisingly high, with average July highs of 26 degrees C. 300,000 people live alongside these wild animals in the ever growing city of Anchorage. But in this urban jungle, the sizzling summer heat, sometimes brings conflict, between humans and wildlife. Forest fires, infestations, and angry animals can all make the summers, truly uncomfortable, in this wild city! But sometimes, living alongside people brings benefits, particularly for a sweaty moose, in the form of a lawn sprinkler!

## 12. Artic Refuge

Alaska one of the last true wildernesses on earth. With 600 square miles of pristine habitat this state is home to an abundance of wildlife. Herds of caribou roam the plains, wolves stalk in the forest and the brown bears are the kings of the rivers. But you don't always have to head to the wild to come face to face with an animal. In the city of Anchorage the wildlife is a lot closer than you think, because a city with so much green space means everywhere is fair game for its wild neighbours. Harbours, Ports and even golf courses have all become unexpected homes for these urban animals.

## 13. Wild Rescue

This city spends most of the year encased in ice...but when summer hits, Anchorage bursts into life. Animals and plants living this far north have been forced to adapt, working faster to make the most of the short season, but these animals built to withstand Alaska's extreme winters, often struggle in Anchorage's summer heat! Temperatures can be surprisingly high, with average July highs of 26 degrees C. 300,000 people live alongside these wild animals in the ever growing city of Anchorage. But in this urban jungle, the sizzling summer heat, sometimes brings conflict, between humans and wildlife. Forest fires, infestations, and angry animals can all make the summers, truly uncomfortable, in this wild city! But sometimes, living alongside people brings benefits, particularly for a sweaty moose, in the form of a lawn sprinkler!