

Nigel Marven: Animal Adventure Collection

various

EPISODIC BREAKDOWN

1. Nigel Marven's Venom Hunters 1 x 60'

We all know that animal venoms can have devastating, possibly deadly consequences for humans. But did you know that there are scientists working worldwide to harness the molecules in venom?

Venom Hunters features Nigel Marven meeting some of the most dangerous reptiles in the world, and the scientists who hope to harness the power of their deadly venom. They hope to create novel cures for some of our worst diseases including cancer and diabetes. Nigel meets with intrepid field workers catching deadly creatures and follows the scientists to discover how they take the precious venom and develop life-saving drugs from it.

With stunning natural history footage look out for the gila monster (a large lizard), brown snakes, funnel web spiders, blue-ringed octopus and pufferfish. Nigel even gets to hear from some of the people going through trials of these remarkable new medicines. Will their lives be transformed, thanks to the animals and the venom hunters?

2. Nigel Marven's Ugly Animals 1 x 60'

Ugly animals are often shunted to one side when it comes to natural history series as the cute, good-looking and highly cuddleable ones get all the air time. But Nigel Marven is about to change all that as he seeks out the ugliest animals in the world. From wrinkled bats to naked mole rats and from ugly bugs to plump toads, we'll find that appearances can be deceptive. In a world obsessed with beauty, being ugly in the animal world has its advantages.

For some animals, being ugly makes them more attractive to the opposite sex and in some cases, what we call ugliness can make the difference between life and death. The warthog is one of Africa's ugliest animals. With its disproportionally shaped head, the warthog looks plain odd. Its tusks, sitting high and low on its face are both formidable weapons and tools that help search for a meal.

But its warts – males have four and females have two – are actually tough bits of gristly skin, which if utilised in battle can actually save their lives. Even the ugliest parts of an animal's body can be crucial to their survival. Ugly Animals shows you should never read a book by its cover.

3. Nigel Marven's Rhino Adventure 1 x 60'

Hundreds of species of rhinoceros once roamed the Earth - but today only five are left. In an effort to understand more about these incredibly tough, yet threatened animals, British wildlife presenter Nigel Marven travels the world to track down the five remaining species. He also meets some amazing people who are using science to help them survive. Taking a step back in time, Nigel also breathes life into the bones of an extinct one - the woolly rhinoceros, which if it were alive today, would be found roaming the English countryside. Nigel's quest to find all five species of rhino begins in the nature parks of Africa, where he gets up close to the relatively tame and approachable African white rhino. He also joins a research team in South Africa, tagging and tracking the black rhino, hoping to increase population numbers - and so far it's working, with rhino numbers on the way up. Unfortunately rhinos continue to be slaughtered for their horns, which are used in eastern medicine. Scientists are yet to produce any evidence that the horn actually contains any healing properties. To track down the one horned Asian rhino, Nigel travels to Assam in India. With its armour-like hide and one horn, the Asian rhino really is a throwback to prehistoric times. An elephant ride through the rhino park provides the best views. More difficult to track is the highly endangered Javan rhino. The thick underbrush of the forest is home to this elusive animal. Unfortunately illegal logging and poaching in the area is impacting dramatically on their population numbers. Nigel's final destination is the nearby rainforests of Sumatra. It is home to the smallest and hairiest of rhino species the Sumatran rhino.

4. Nigel Marven's Animal Detectives 1 x 60'

A one-hour documentary. This film looks at how animals and plants can help solve crime. Nigel meets the world's foremost crime-busting scientists and in the process learns how they've used the natural world to convict some notorious felons. Flies and their maggots can reveal how long a body has lain undiscovered and microscopic pollen can match a killer to the scene of his crime. Sniffer dogs can track distant criminals and detect tiny quantities of petrol used to mount an arson attack. Even terrorists can be snared by animals - maggots found in the aftermath of an explosion can be analysed for traces of chemicals, giving vital clues as to who carried out the attack. Nigel also visits a remarkable facility run by the University of Tennessee where cameras study the animals that come to feed on human corpses. Throughout the film we also follow a fictional murder from start to finish, committed by none other than Nigel Marven himself. He thought he had committed the perfect crime, but animal and plant evidence proved too strong and eventually the police caught up with him.

5. Nigel Marven's Penguin Safari 5 x 60'

In the southern spring, the breathtakingly beautiful island of South Georgia becomes a vital breeding oasis for the greatest concentration of wildlife on the planet.

This narrow sub-Antarctic island stretches for 106 miles across the Southern Ocean. Snow-capped mountains tower out of South Georgia's spine whilst huge glaciers and snowfields cover about 75% of the island, even in summer. It's an isolated world; the tip of South America, Tierra del Fuego, lies 1,340 miles to the west.

Presenter Nigel Marven arrives at the end of winter as the island is still gripped by snow and ice. He'll keep watch on the raucous and raunchy events as spring unfolds. For 40 days Nigel and his crew bring this fabulous spectacle to life. In five one-hour shows they cover moments of true drama but they also get to know individual characters and experience their day-to-day lives.

Join Nigel Marven as he takes a close-up look at the lives of these beautiful creatures in their natural habitat. Each programme highlights a week in the life of the animals of this island. We meet Basil & Cybil the macaroni penguins; Terry & June the gentoo penguins and Charles, a penguin with "strange" markings. Nigel gets to know these individual penguins and their seal and albatross neighbours, and samples the day-to-day soap opera of their lives.

6. Killer Whale Islands With Nigel Marven 1 x 60'

Produced in the 25th anniversary year of the 1982 conflict, this hour long special takes an amazing look at the huge variety of wildlife in the Falkland Islands.

Using a light plane to go 'island-hopping', Presenter Nigel Marven spends time travelling around the islands during January and February, the height of the southern summer, exploring the most interesting wildlife sites and enjoying the rugged scenery. He meets four different species of penguins and their young, elephant seals, the largest in the world, sealions swimming through the underwater kelp forests and rare birds of prey that make these islands their stronghold, all making the most of the short period of warmer weather.

But perhaps the most amazing scene of all is played out in the waters offshore, as a pod of orcas (killer whales), teach their young the hunting tactics that make these beautiful but deadly creatures the greatest predators in the southern seas. The tension mounts as Nigel watches an elephant seal pup that finds itself in mortal danger after being swept out to deep water

7. Arctic Exposure With Nigel Marven 5 x 60'

Intrepid zoologist, Nigel Marven, spends nine months exploring wildlife and the surrounding area in the Canadian Arctic. His expedition takes him from the icy wasteland of the far north, across near-endless tundra to the vast boreal forest in the south. From newborn polar bears taking their first tentative steps out of their den to an Arctic wolf brazenly attacking a herd of musk ox, you'll be witness to some of the most awe-inspiring scenes in nature. Zoologist Nigel Marven spends nine months exploring the wildlife found in the extreme conditions of the Arctic, encountering foxes, beluga whales, great gray owls, harp seals and much more, observing their incredible methods of survival. There's even a brilliant appearance by the Northern Lights.

New Life of Spring

Nigel starts his journey following wildlife in the Canadian Arctic.

The Thaw Begins

Nigel visits arctic foxes and their cubs; beluga whales arrive in the river.

High Summer

In Igloolik, Nunavut, Nigel dives from an iceberg and swims with walruses; bowhead whales; an update on the nine arctic fox cubs.

Return of the Ice

In Churchill, Nigel gets up close with polar bears.

The Journey Ends

Highlights of the Arctic year; how climate change can affect animals.