

Young & Wild (Series 1)

13 X 30 MINUTES

EPISODIC BREAKDOWN

1. First Breath

The process of birth can be a traumatic time for a mother and one when her life and the lives of her offspring are at great risk. Within the mammal group, each species differs in the way in which it prepares for birth but of all Africa's wild animals, the mammals shower the most attention on their young.

2. Breaking Through

Africa's wild babies face many hazards especially those that must brave a new world alone and face predators, disease, and starvation. But those that hatch from eggs face the greatest odds as most egg-laying parents deposit their eggs, and leave them to fate, while only a few stay on hand to see their babies safely on their way.

3. Home Truths

In order to survive every creature needs somewhere to hide from nature. Which is why they pursue the business of shelter with such zeal. Whether they live sociably, underground or up a tree, however humble or ambitious natures home makers may be, the variety of architecture and technique is endless.

4. First Bond

This relationship between mother and offspring is vital in the development and survival of young, and it's more than just a need for protection and continuous feeding. It is this first bond which helps to hone skills necessary to survive the many challenges that a life in the wild presents.

5. Safety First

Nature has ensured that all young creatures are given an equal chance to survive and withstand the many dangers of the wild, and some species have instinctive mechanisms for the protection of their young. With mammals the most intimate care is given by the mother, but as this episode shows, the protection of the young is often the responsibility of a group as well as the parents.

6. Mr Mom

When it comes to looking after the young, females are usually in control, and most babies retreat into mum's arms for food, protection. But either through a freak of nature or simply by grand design, there are certain times in the wild where roles are reversed and dad helps out too.

7. Family Affairs

In many animals, the mother/child bond is taken a step further than usual and a family, whether a small group of extended siblings or an entire colony of thousands of individuals, make their contribution and play an important role in the survival of many wild babies. This episode looks at the babies who owe their existence to the vigilance of their community.

8. Table Manners

Babies are born small and have a relatively short time in which to grow to a size where they can look after themselves. This growth is accompanied with developmental changes, which are equally vital to their survival, so it's not surprising that from the first moments of life the main occupation of all baby animals is feeding.

9. Risky Business

Because of their small size and inexperience, baby animals are by their very nature vulnerable in the world at large. The danger may be a super predator, a freak storm, a dangerous enemy or even simply their own sibling, but whatever the hazard there are many perils that makes this growing up experience a risky business.

10. Basic Instincts

Because most babies' basic needs are met by the mother, the babies have time to develop those skills needed for their survival. This learning process can either takes place through interaction with others, trial and error or basic instinct. These essential skills are often developed while playing and interacting with siblings and babies, which can also be a lot of fun.

11. First Steps

In all babies lives there comes a time when the lure of the outside world becomes too attractive to resist and the once-strong bonds with mother are severed. The lure of independence begins a new phase of the babies' lives: from learning to walk, to begin fending for oneself. For these adolescents these first steps are perhaps the most important they'll ever take.

12. The Dating Game

All species are driven to procreate, but before that they must find a partner. From an animal's first breath, to his first steps, to leaving the maternal bonds behind, he is moving with one purpose – to find a mate. But it isn't always as easy as it sounds.

13. Full Circle

In the wild there are many different methods of attracting a mate. Persistent harassing, mutual attraction, or just being in the right place at the right time, all can work. Mating is the culmination of a life's work. Having remarkably survived from first breath through the many challenges of the wild and finally back again to the fertilisation and growth of another life, the cycle revolves again.