



Part 11

SWIFT FOXES



Once, millions of swift foxes roamed the North Canadian prairies. And then there were none.

As settlers tamed the West for farming, the prairie swift fox was driven to extinction. Now Clio Smeeton – carrying on a unique project begun by her parents – is raising swift foxes on her Canadian prairie farm and releasing them into the wild. If she succeeds, Canada will be the first country in history to re-introduce a

species extinct in its territory.

Endangered animals – and the champions who have dedicated their lives to saving them – feature in this spectacular series of 13 half-hour videos! Stunningly shot around the world, from the frozen ice fields of Canada's North to the jungles of Borneo, **Champions of the Wild** combines fascinating natural history with the intrigue of personal drama.

Director: **Christian Bruyère**

Producers: **Christian Bruyère and Ian Herring** (Omni Film),
George Johnson (NFB)

Executive Producer: **Michael Chechik** (Omni Film)

25 minutes

Order number: **C9197 094**

Series order number: **193C 9197 106**

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VHS

C9197 094



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SWIFT FOXES



AS SEEN ON
DISCOVERY
AND
ANIMAL
PLANET

A NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA RELEASE

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Clio Smeeton's life work was begun by her parents, Miles and Berle Smeeton, who settled in Cochrane, Alberta and, inspired by the beauty of the land, sought to find a way to give back some of the enjoyment it gave them.

They decided that they would re-introduce the swift fox, declared extirpated from Canada in the '70s, to its native Prairie habitat. Once part of a delicately balanced ecosystem, the swift fox population in Canada was wiped out as European settlers attempted to tame the land for farming use. Clio Smeeton, a former model, took over her parents' campaign after they died.

Swift foxes from the US are raised on Smeeton's farm in large dens. This environment is designed to mimic the wild in which they will eventually find themselves. The dens are uncovered, to teach the growing animals about the dangers of hawks and other predators. When old enough, the young animals are released into the wild in family groups, with food and water supplies nearby.

When she has completed the restoration work, Clio Smeeton will have raised and released 250 breeding swift fox pairs into the land where they flourished just 100 years ago. If the program is successful, Canada will be the first country in history to re-introduce an extirpated species.

PRE-VIEWING QUESTIONS

Locate Cochrane, Alberta and the Canadian Prairies on a map. Describe the climate and ecology of this part of Canada.

What is the difference between extinct, extirpated and endangered?

POST-VIEWING QUESTIONS

What is a captive breeding program and what kind of impact does this type of program have on the survivability of the species?

Clio Smeeton discusses the debate between the re-introduction of a species and its translocation. Debate the pros and cons of each of these programs.

How did human beings change the swift fox's native habitat and ecosystem?

How is the swift fox's captive environment like that of the free-range environment? Why must the captive environment mimic the free environment?



Champion:
Clio Smeeton

Champions of the Wild

is a spectacular
13-part series featuring
endangered animals
and the champions
who have dedicated
their lives to
saving them.

Produced by
Omni Film Productions Ltd

with the participation of
Telefilm Canada,

in association with
British Columbia Film,
Amaya Distribution,
Discovery Channel and
The National Film Board
of Canada, and
with the participation of
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and Rogers Telefund.



WORLD WIDE WEB SITES:

Lots of swift fox information

<http://www.gov.ab.ca/~env/nrs/wildlife/threatsp/fox/man.html>

More information on the swift fox

<http://www.ec.gc.ca/cws-scf/hww-fap/fox/fox.html>

OTHER NATIONAL FILM BOARD PRODUCTIONS:

Return of the Swift Fox, 27 minutes, order number C0188 035

Prairie Grasslands: Wind Country, 48 minutes, order number C9192 125

CHAMPIONS OF THE WILD SERIES:

Part 1: SHARKS (C9197 096): From their research station on Bimini Island in the Bahamas, Tim Calver and his mentor, Dr. Sam Gruber, are committed to changing the world's negative perception of sharks.

Part 2: GORILLAS (C9197 104): In the dangerous surroundings of Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park, Dr. Pascale Sicotte risks her life to protect one of the world's last remaining populations of mountain gorillas.

Part 3: GRIZZLIES (C9197 093): Wayne McCrory has spent the last 25 years passionately campaigning to protect the grizzly and rare white spirit bears of the British Columbia rain forest.

Part 4: WOLVES (C9197 103): Dr. Paul Paquet studies the harmful effects of wolves coming into contact with civilization and has succeeded in reintroducing wolf packs into the southern Alberta Rockies.

Part 5: HUMPBACKS (C9197 099): Dr. Jim Darling, a leading authority on humpback whales, follows the migration of these magnificent creatures in order to protect them in their Pacific environment.

Part 6: PANDAS (C9197 102): A self-proclaimed "pandaholic," Dr. Sue Mainka helps the Chinese make critical breakthroughs in raising captive pandas.

Part 7: LEMURS (C9197 105): Dr. Lisa Gould's mission is to protect the ring-tailed lemurs of Madagascar and to make the world aware of these obscure primates.

Part 8: ORCAS (C9197 100): Radical researcher and visionary Dr. Paul Spong, having researched killer whales for over three decades, helps us understand how humans affect orca habitat and behaviour.

Part 9: POLAR BEARS (C9197 095): Biologist and photographer Dr. Dan Guravich has a love affair with the polar bear. His thousands of photographs have profoundly influenced our understanding of the world's largest land-based carnivore.

Part 10: DOLPHINS (C9197 097): Diane Claridge and Ken Balcomb are leaders in the fight to free the planet's imprisoned dolphins and whales and return them to the wild.

Part 11: SWIFT FOXES (C9197 094): Clio Smeeton has dedicated her life to completing her parents' dream of reintroducing the once-extinct swift fox to its Canadian Prairie home.

Part 12: RIGHT WHALES (C9197 101): By policing the Bay of Fundy and educating those who use the world's waterways, Deborah Tobin and Dr. Moira Brown are dedicated to saving the northern right whales, the planet's rarest marine mammal.

Part 13: ORANGUTANS (C9197 098): Activist researcher Dr. Biruté Galdikas lives in the gruelling jungles of Borneo and Sumatra, fighting to save the increasingly threatened orangutan.