



CHAMPIONS
OF THE
WILD

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OF THE
WILD

BENGAL TIGERS

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AS SEEN ON
DISCOVERY
AND
ANIMAL
PLANET



VHS

C9198 142

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BENGAL TIGERS



India and tigers go hand in hand. There were once over 100,000 of these majestic, regal beasts roaming the country's forests. But years of trophy hunting during the colonial era, ongoing rampant habitat destruction and poaching for the tiger-parts trade have made their situation critical.

Tigers need room to roam: the average male patrols a territory of about 13,000 hectares (50 square miles). Tigers don't just need space, they need to be surrounded by enough potential prey to keep them going. A good-sized tiger meal might contain 32 kilograms (70 pounds) of meat, and a tiger will usually hunt every three days or so. If it goes 10 days without a kill, a tiger is likely to die.

If tigers disappear, it will be almost entirely due to very preventable human causes: habitat destruction, poaching and poisoning.

The international trade in tiger parts is illegal – and highly profitable. Many traditional Chinese remedies for common ailments, such as impotence and rheumatism, use tiger bones. China exported 27 million products with tiger derivatives between 1990 and 1993.

While some Western conservationists adopt a strident, morally absolute point of view, Anthony Marr does not blame Indian villagers who poison the tigers that kill their livestock. Nor does he condemn those in China who buy tiger medicine without realizing how environmentally destructive it is. At the same time, he is passionate in his conviction that the killing of tigers and the destruction of their forests must stop.

Marr knows that while many westerners care about the fate of the tiger, others are apathetic. And he knows that the fate of the tiger is going to ultimately be decided by those who live in the East.

As a Chinese Canadian (he was born in China in 1944), Marr is in a unique position to do something about the tiger trade, whose products are readily available not only in China, but also in Chinese apothecaries throughout the world. "I expect to make a critical difference," Marr explained in a 1997 interview. "I'm the only Chinese person in the world working on a campaign to stop the consumption side."

Pre-Viewing Questions

1. Most of this video is shot in India's Bandhavgarh National Park. Locate the park on a map of India.
2. There is a flourishing trade in tiger parts. In what cultures are tiger parts prized? What are they used for?
3. How many tiger cubs do you think a mother can usually raise to maturity within a year?



Champion:
Anthony Marr

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Post-Viewing Questions

1. Is it illegal to import, sell or use traditional medicines containing tiger parts where you live? What would you do if you walked into a shop selling such items?
2. Anthony Marr says that convincing Indian children to want to protect tigers is a key step in tiger conservation. It's easy to say, "I want to save tigers," but can kids really help? Discuss some concrete steps international agencies and Indian villagers could take to improve the relationship between people and tigers.
3. As long as dead tigers fetch so much money on the international market, there will be poaching. Anthony Marr promotes eco-tourism as one way to make tigers more valuable alive than dead. Has eco-tourism helped save other species? What are some of the positive effects of eco-tourism? What are some of its negative effects?

World Wide Web Sites

Please note that addresses on the Web can change unexpectedly.

A site with good tiger info for kids and teachers:

www.5tigers.org

Also on this site an update on the Bandhavgarh Tiger Trust:

www.5tigers.org/btt.htmwww.wildernesscommittee.org/betr.html

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BENGAL TIGERS



A tiger sits motionless, hidden. Then it starts to move – very slowly at first: one of the world's most tenacious predators is on the prowl. Birds, deer, monkeys run for cover. The tiger's legs drive it forward at high speed as it chooses its prey and relentlessly runs it down.

It's a magical sight, pure power and speed. And we may be the last generation to witness it. These are truly dark days for the tigers of the world. One subspecies

became extinct during the 1970s, another in the '80s. Today fewer than 5,000 Bengal tigers remain in the wild.

Conservationist Anthony Marr feels a near-mystical connection with tigers. "They get right into the core of my soul," he says. "It's a magical feeling just to know they exist."

Largely shot in India's Bandhavgarh National Park, **Bengal Tigers** is a plea to save one of the world's most remarkable creatures. During the '70s, the international community came together to save the whales. Now it's time to save the tigers.

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

Director: **Andrew Gardner**

Producer: **Christian Bruyère**

Executive Producer: **Michael Chechik**

25 minutes, 30 seconds

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