



**CHAMPIONS  
OF THE  
WILD**

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# NAZINGA GAME RESERVE

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**AS SEEN ON  
DISCOVERY  
AND  
ANIMAL  
PLANET**



VHS

C9198 145

A NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA RELEASE

# NAZINGA GAME RESERVE

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The son of Canadian missionaries, Clark Lungren moved to Burkina Faso with his family when he was just a toddler. They lived in villages where malnourishment was a way of life and where drought caused great hardship. But Lungren loved the land and the wild animals that roamed there.

By the time he grew up, his beloved animals had all but disappeared. In the 1960s poachers had discovered Nazinga — a vast swath of once-thriving savannah — and had killed many of the elephants, antelopes and other wildlife. Sometimes the meat went to feed poachers' families, sometimes it was smoked and sold along the coast.

Lungren recalls a late-1960s trip through the Nazinga region in which he saw only two animals in 10 days. He hatched a plan to rejuvenate the savannah, save the animals, and provide an income for villagers.

International aid agencies scoffed. They thought the future lay in importing livestock for the country's growing population. But Lungren knew that droughts were frequent in the region, and that native animals were far better suited for survival than cattle and goats. He also knew that local culture was suffering: people once hunted for a living and for spiritual sustenance, but now there were not enough animals left to sustain body or spirit.

He got the enthusiastic support of the locals for his plan to set aside about 4,700 square kilometres (1,800 square miles) as a wildlife preserve. They built dams to increase water in the parched region, and they set out on anti-poaching patrols. Eventually, the government and aid agencies came onboard too. Ten years after the project began, wildlife had increased ten-fold.

One of Nazinga's greatest successes has been the return of elephants. Once there were only 40 or so. Today, there are hundreds — so many, in fact, that they are putting a lot of strain on the local environment. Given the alternative, dealing with them is a problem Clark Lungren is happy to have.



Champion:  
**Clark Lungren**

**Champions of the Wild** takes you around the globe with stories of remarkable endangered species and the dedicated champions determined to save them. Buy the whole collection!

## **Pre-Viewing Questions**

1. Locate Burkina Faso on a map and research some basic facts about the country. What is the population? Is it growing rapidly?
2. Find some of the more common animals native to the country. Are they endangered?

## **Post-Viewing Questions**

1. Two keys to the Nazinga project's success are an increased water supply (which involved building dams) and the cooperation of the villagers (which meant allowing them to hunt some of the wildlife). Damming involves changes to the natural world, and allowing a hunt runs counter to the beliefs of many conservationists. Do you think these compromises were worthwhile? Could the project have succeeded without them?
2. Is the Nazinga experiment sustainable? Do you think this kind of project could succeed elsewhere?

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## **World Wide Web Sites**

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*Please note that addresses on the Web can change unexpectedly.*

Factsheet on Burkina Faso from Microsoft's concise Encarta encyclopedia. The site also includes resources for teachers:

[encarta.msn.com/index/conciseindex/47/0478c000.htm](http://encarta.msn.com/index/conciseindex/47/0478c000.htm)

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## NAZINGA GAME RESERVE



International development experts laughed when Clark Lungren told them he had a plan to save the wildlife of southern Burkina Faso, in West Africa. It's a good thing Lungren didn't listen. Today the Nazinga Game Reserve is home to a burgeoning population of elephants and other creatures once rare in the region.

Nazinga's success comes thanks to local know-how and the amazing regenerative powers of nature. Local village culture had always been based on hunting, but poaching had exterminated much of the wildlife. So Lungren struck a deal: the villagers would help save the animals, and they would have the right to hunt a few to feed their families.

It worked. Today tourists come to see the magnificent elephants — and some of the game wardens and guides are reformed poachers.

It's a remarkable story that speaks of the healing power of nature and of the ability of humans to turn around a desperate situation.

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Director: **Andrew Gardner**

Producer: **Christian Bruyère**

Executive Producer: **Michael Chechik**

**25 minutes, 30 seconds**

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