

**CHAMPIONS
OF THE
WILD**

Part 5

HUMPBACKS



A humpback whale is 40 tons of mystery. These giant creatures range from their feeding grounds off southern British Columbia to the waters around Hawaii, where they winter and breed. And every year, Dr. Jim Darling follows them as they travel through their ecologically fragile habitat.

Until Jim Darling came along, scientists who wanted to study whales killed them. Darling turned whale research upside-down in 1971 when he began tracking whales and their sounds with underwater microphones, and using photos to identify individuals. He brings incredible passion to his study of some of the most spectacular creatures on the planet.

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: **Anthony Perzel**

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

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

25 minutes

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VHS

C9197 099

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HUMPBACKS

AS SEEN ON
DISCOVERY
AND
**ANIMAL
PLANET**



A NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA RELEASE

HUMPBACKS

Part 5

Humpback whales travel from their feeding grounds at the tip of British Columbia's Vancouver Island to the Hawaiian Islands, where they spend the winter and breed. BC's Dr. Jim Darling goes with them.

By 1966, the humpback population was reduced from 200,000 to a mere 1,000 mammals. They were being decimated by whaling and lack of public interest. Today things have improved, largely due to Dr. Jim Darling and his fellow researchers who have spent their lives following the great mammal in an effort to increase the world's understanding of this phenomenal creature and secure its survival.

Dr. Darling became the first of a new breed of whale researchers in 1971 when, in trying to answer public questions about whales, he found there were few answers. He dedicated himself to studying whales in a revolutionary new manner. Previously, whale research had concentrated on studying corpses on whaling ships or by killing whales specifically for research. It was believed that whales could not be studied in their natural habitats because they spend so little time on the surface. Dr. Darling turned this thinking on its head when he started tracking whales and their sounds via hydrophones and using photo identification to isolate each individual whale and pod.

PRE-VIEWING QUESTIONS

Locate British Columbia, Vancouver Island, the Pacific Ocean and the Hawaiian Islands on a map. How many kilometers do the whales travel as they migrate between Hawaii and British Columbia?

The average adult humpback whale is approximately 40 feet long and weighs approximately 40 tons. What, in the students' environment, is approximately 40 feet long? How many students would have to stand on a scale in order to approximate the weight of one whale?

POST-VIEWING QUESTIONS

Why were whales hunted? What do people do with the different parts of the whales' bodies?

How do whales use their sense of sound? What is the relationship between their sense of sound and their ability to sing and communicate?

How do whales fish for their food? How does the available food supply affect the life cycle and biorhythms of the whale?

An important area of research on whales is the identification of the members of whale pods. Why is this area of research so important in determining the viability of the whale population? How do the researchers identify the members of the pods?



Champion:
Dr. Jim Darling

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

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in association with
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Discovery Channel and
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of Canada, and
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WORLD WIDE WEB SITES:

Whale songs

<http://kingfish.ssp.nmfs.gov/songs.html>

A picture gallery of humpback whales

<http://www.t-link.net/~whale/html/gallery.html>

Feeding behaviour of Pacific humpback whales

<http://fas.sfu.ca/cs/research/projects/Whales>

Lots of whale links

<http://www.webdirectory.com/wildlife/whales>

OTHER NATIONAL FILM BOARD PRODUCTIONS:

In Search of the Bowhead Whale

The Whales Are Waiting

We Call Them Killers

Cries From the Deep

Island of Whales

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.