

# NATURE

press information



PBS

**thirteen**  
WNET NEW YORK

THIRTEEN/WNET NEW YORK'S *NATURE* FOLLOWS CHANGING FATES IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD WHEN *ARCTIC BEARS* PREMIERES SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17 ON PBS

Program Follows Grizzlies And Polar Bears As Climate Change Alters Their Age-Old Way Of Life

The polar bear, one of the largest land predators since the dinosaurs, was born out of climate change. As the deep freeze of the last ice age set in, polar bears evolved from grizzlies, adapting to live and hunt on the frozen Arctic Sea. Today, climate change is again dramatically affecting the Arctic bears. As winters warm and ice disappears, the polar bears are living on borrowed time, while grizzlies are finding an increasingly abundant world. *NATURE* offers a close-up look at each species as the tables turn when *Arctic Bears* premieres Sunday, February 17, 2008 at 8 p.m. (ET) on PBS (check local listings). Academy Award-winning actor F. Murray Abraham is series narrator.

“Polar bears have been in the news a lot lately because their Arctic habitat is changing quickly,” said Fred Kaufman, executive producer of *NATURE*. “But they’re only half the story. Their ancestor, the grizzly, is facing a new world as well, and this program tracks both at close range to see just how they’re faring.”

From a polar bear giving birth in her snowy den, to fascinating scenes of grizzly and polar bear mothers passing down hunting and survival skills to their cubs, *Arctic Bears* captures the species from the dark depths of winter to the mild days in June when the sun never fully sets.

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But climate change is quickly altering the bears' age-old way of life. Today, the distance in midsummer between the polar ice cap and the shore of northern Canada is 200 miles, when once it was 50. The thaw is an urgent problem for polar bears, for whom less ice means access to fewer seals – the prey that makes up 95 percent of their diet. The widening summer sea also means marathon swims in search of solid surfaces, which cubs need for sleeping and suckling.

Meanwhile, grizzlies are venturing farther north, into the once-icy domain of the polar bear. They are masters at living off the land and can eat almost anything, so the vast new foraging areas work in their favor. But the world of the polar bears is shrinking. They have seemingly forgotten how to be grizzlies and are struggling to adapt to an ancestral world they no longer remember. If the white Arctic world vanishes, so too may the white bears.

Now in its 26th season on PBS, *NATURE* has won more than 400 honors from the television industry, the international wildlife film community, parent groups, and environmental organizations – including 10 Emmys, two Peabodys and the first award given to a television program by the Sierra Club. In 2007, the series won Emmy Awards for *Chimpanzees: An Unnatural History* and *Christmas in Yellowstone*.

*NATURE* video podcasts, available on iTunes and at *NATURE Online* ([www.pbs.org/nature](http://www.pbs.org/nature)), range from two to 10 minutes in length and feature behind-the-scenes interviews with filmmakers and producers, program excerpts and outtakes.

Last year, to celebrate the series' silver anniversary, *NATURE Online* launched a redesigned and expanded Web site. In addition to the weekly video podcasts, new features include a newsletter, streaming video clips, an RSS feed, user bulletin boards and polls, new teacher lesson plans, photo slideshows, and more. Online social networkers can join the *NATURE* fan group at Facebook and keep up with the latest videos, photos, and more.

*Arctic Bears* is a co-production of Thirteen/WNET New York and BBC. *NATURE* is produced by Thirteen/WNET New York for PBS. Fred Kaufman is executive producer; William

Grant is executive-in-charge. Major corporate support for *NATURE* is provided by Canon U.S.A., Inc. and Toyota. Additional support is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the nation's public television stations.

The series is closed-captioned for the hearing-impaired and distributed with Descriptive Video Service (DVS) for the sight-impaired.

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Thirteen/WNET New York is one of the key program providers for public television, bringing such acclaimed series as *Nature*, *Great Performances*, *American Masters*, *Charlie Rose*, *Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly*, *Wide Angle*, *Secrets of the Dead*, *NOW With David Brancaccio*, and *Cyberchase* – as well as the work of Bill Moyers – to audiences nationwide. As the flagship public broadcaster in the New York, New Jersey and Connecticut metro area, Thirteen reaches millions of viewers each week, airing the best of American public television along with its own local productions such as *The Ethnic Heritage Specials*, *The Thirteen Walking Tours*, *New York Voices*, and *Reel New York*. Thirteen extends the impact of its television productions through educational and community outreach projects – including the Teaching and Learning Celebration – as well as Web sites and other digital media platforms. More information can be found at: [www.thirteen.org](http://www.thirteen.org).

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