



NATURE



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THIRTEEN's *Nature* explores a coming-of-age story about a humpback whale in *Fellowship of the Whales*, November 15, 2009 on PBS

***Fellowship of the Whales* is available for streaming on *Nature Online* (pbs.org/nature).**

To breach or not to breach. Or more importantly, how to breach, and when to breach. Those are key questions for a young humpback whale as she spends her first year learning the lessons of whale life from her mother. *Nature* journeys with the young whale from the warm, subtropical waters of Hawaii to the cold, bountiful seas off the coast of Alaska, as she finds her way and takes her place in the world of humpbacks. ***Nature: Fellowship of the Whales*** premieres on Sunday, November 15, 2009 at 8 p.m. (ET) on PBS (check local listings). Academy Award-winning actor F. Murray Abraham narrates. ***Fellowship of the Whales*** is available for streaming on ***Nature Online*** (pbs.org/nature).

Nature is a production of THIRTEEN in association with WNET.ORG – one of America's most prolific and respected public media providers.

Fellowship of the Whales begins in the calving grounds for humpbacks, off the coast of Hawaii, where a mother whale gives birth to a baby she has carried for nearly twelve months, and which now weighs a ton and a half. Hawaii is the winter home of humpbacks, where the warm waters and protected bays and coves give shelter to newborn calves and their mothers. It is here that the baby whale will take her first breath, learn to use her flippers and tail to communicate with other whales, to protect herself, and to proclaim her presence in the world.

This is also where the humpbacks mate, and fight for females to mate with. Those young mothers not yet ready to mate move away from the danger zone with their newborns as huge male show of for females and jostle with other males for the best positions, defending their chosen female from the others. Behind a cloud of bubbles the dominant male will father her next calf.

Feeding on her mother's milk, the young female grows quickly, gaining about a hundred pounds a day. When she is ready, she and her mother will join a long procession of whales heading 2,500 miles north to summer feeding grounds. Food is not concentrated enough in Hawaiian waters to satisfy humpback whales, and while the calf has been gaining weight, her mother has been losing it – she hasn't fed for over four months.

Along the way are more lessons to learn, including all the dangers of the open sea. When she and her mother arrive, the calf will learn how humpbacks cooperate in this new environment to take full advantage of the superabundance of whale food available here. For the whole summer, all of the whales will feast on krill and herring, one enormous mouthful after another. By November, the whales begin their return to the south.

The young female is twice as long and eight times as heavy as when her journey began. When they reach Hawaii, her mother will mate again, and the calf will be on her own, putting to good use all that she has learned in the year she has spent with her mother, ready to take her place in the fellowship of whales where she belongs.

Visit **Nature Online** (pbs.org/nature) to watch previous programs and get updates about the series. Viewers can sound off about issues explored on **Nature**, take polls, and share animal photos with the **Nature** community.

Nature has won more than 450 honors from the television industry, the international wildlife film communities, and environmental organizations – including 10 Emmys, three Peabodys and the first award given to a television program by the Sierra Club. Most recently, the series won a Peabody Award for *Silence of the Bees* and received two Emmy nominations for *Crash: A Tale of Two Species* and *White Falcon, White Wolf*.

Nature's Fellowship of the Whales is a production of Ocean Planet Images and YNR Marketing in association with The Australian Broadcast Corporation. **Nature** is a production of THIRTEEN in association with WNET.ORG 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. Additional support is provided by the nation's public television stations.

Nature Online (pbs.org/nature) is the award-winning web companion to the broadcast series and is spearheading **Nature's** distribution to new media platforms. At **Nature Online**, visitors can stream full episodes of **Nature** programs, watch behind-the-scenes video exclusives with filmmakers and producers (also available at iTunes), view program excerpts (also available on YouTube), and find fun interactive content, teacher lesson plans, and more. Join Nature on Facebook ([Facebook.com/PBSNature](https://www.facebook.com/PBSNature)) and follow the series on Twitter ([Twitter.com/PBSNature](https://twitter.com/PBSNature)) to keep up with the latest videos, photos, program alerts and more.

About WNET.ORG

New York public media company WNET.ORG is a pioneering provider of television and web content. The parent of THIRTEEN, WLIW21 and Creative News Group, WNET.ORG brings such acclaimed broadcast

series and websites as [Worldfocus](#), [Nature](#), [Great Performances](#), [American Masters](#), [Charlie Rose](#), [Wide Angle](#), [Secrets of the Dead](#), [Religion & Ethics Newsweekly](#), [Visions](#), [Consuelo Mack WealthTrack](#), [Wild Chronicles](#), [Miffy and Friends](#), and [Cyberchase](#) to national and international audiences. Through its wide range of channels and platforms, WNET.ORG serves the entire New York City metro area with unique local productions, broadcasts and innovative educational and cultural projects. In all that it does, WNET.ORG pursues a single, overarching goal – to create media experiences of lasting significance for New York, America and the world. For more information, visit www.wnet.org.

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