

# NATURE

press information

25 YEARS



PBS

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WNET NEW YORK

THIRTEEN/WNET NEW YORK'S *NATURE* TRACKS ONE CREATURE'S EXTRAORDINARY ODYSSEY ACROSS THE VAST PACIFIC IN *VOYAGE OF THE LONELY TURTLE*, PREMIERING APRIL 15 ON PBS

On Her Perilous Journey Home, A Loggerhead Turtle Encounters Exotic Kingdoms Of Ocean Life, Evades Deadly Predators And Navigates Man-Made Obstacles

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It is among the longest known migrations by sea or land – the female loggerhead turtle's solitary, yearlong voyage across 9,000 miles of the Pacific Ocean. Driven by instinct and risking her very survival, she undertakes an astounding odyssey to return to her birthplace to lay her eggs. From the sunny ocean surface to the perilous dark depths, through typhoons and the effects of climate change, she perseveres so that she may give life to a new generation.

Premiering Sunday, April 15 at 8 p.m. (ET) on PBS (check local listings), and narrated by Academy Award-winning actor F. Murray Abraham, *Voyage of the Lonely Turtle* takes viewers along this amazing migration. Through dazzling underwater footage, the program captures the myriad creatures that share the Pacific waters: hammerhead sharks and sperm whales, manta rays and dolphins, giant squid, saltwater crocodiles, clouds of jellies, and more.

Like the fabled tortoise, the loggerhead turtle journeys slowly but steadily, averaging one mile per hour over her epic trek. Departing from the coast of Mexico, she swims for six months before resting in the Hawaiian Islands, then continues for the shores of Japan. All the while, she is driven by the instinctual memory of the place she was born 30 years before.

But her trip is far from smooth sailing. The loggerhead can remain underwater for about six hours at a time, but she needs to take a breath at least once a night – which might mean a careful

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dance around deadly white-tipped reef sharks to reach the ocean surface. Elsewhere, she may briefly rest to wait for the traffic of thousands of hammerhead sharks to glide by.

Leviathans also inhabit the Pacific waters she crosses. One of the biggest is also one of the fastest: the blue whale, whose tongue weighs more than an elephant and whose veins are wide enough for a human to swim through, zips around the Pacific burning 1,000 calories per minute. And in the depths far below the loggerhead's passage, the planet's largest predator, the sperm whale, preys on giant 50-foot-long squid with eyes the size of dinner plates. The sperm whale can reach 60 feet in length and weigh 50 tons.

The Pacific's bountiful aquatic life also includes the Mola mola, a half-ton sunfish, which seeks dermatological help from hungry fish that will clean its skin of parasitic worms. The clever manta ray seeks the same service from surgeonfish – only to feed on its helper's eggs afterward.

Besides natural predators, the loggerhead turtle must be careful of industrial-scale fishing along her voyage. Huge commercial trawler nets aim to sweep up millions of dollars worth of yellowfin tuna, but aren't always so discriminating. Long-line fishing vessels also pose a threat.

After 9,000 miles, the loggerhead finally reaches her goal – a beach in Japan. She digs a hole, laying and burying about 100 eggs, and then heads back into the Pacific. She won't return to Mexico, but will stay in the waters around Japan and China for the rest of her life, which can last 100 years or more. Her tiny offspring, though, will find their way to the sea and be carried by the same currents that she once traveled on, making their own epic voyage back to the other side of the Pacific – and beginning anew the improbable life cycle of a loggerhead turtle.

Now in its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, *NATURE* has won nearly 400 honors from the television industry, the international wildlife film community, parent groups, and environmental organizations, including eight Emmys, two Peabodys and the first award given to a television program by the Sierra Club.

To celebrate the series' 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, **NATURE ONLINE** ([www.pbs.org/nature](http://www.pbs.org/nature)) has launched a redesigned and expanded Web site, including such new features as a weekly video podcast and newsletter, streaming video clips, an RSS feed, user bulletin boards and polls, new teacher lesson plans, photo slideshows, and more.

*Voyage of the Lonely Turtle* 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 Ford. 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 Celebration of Teaching and Learning - 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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