RACE LIFE

13 x 26 min. HD

"Every morning in Africa, a gazelle awakens

One thing is sure for the gazelle that day, as every other: ·
He must run faster than the fastest lion. If he cannot, he will be killed and eaten.

Every morning in Africa a lion awakens:
For the lion one thing too is certain. This day and everyday, he must run faster than the slowest gazelle. If he cannot, he will surely die of hunger.

Whether fate names you a gazelle or a lion is of no consequence.
It is enough to know that with the rising of the sun, you must run. And you must run faster than yesterday for the rest of your days, or you will die."

This is the Race of Life.

From an African Poem
by Abe Gubegna

DESCRIPTION CONCEPT :

It's a Battle for Survival, and the Rush to stay One Step Ahead – a Step that can be the Difference between Life and Death. And as the Sun Rises, the Race Begins all over again – from the Mightiest Predators to the Tiny Creatures that teem underfoot. Each and every one of them has the Instinct for Survival. Each and every creature must Run Faster, and Stay Ahead of the Game. If not, the Consequences can be Fatal. In the Race of Life, there are No Prizes for Coming Second…

1. **This is not just another wildlife documentary but something completely unique. Race of Life captures the mystery, adventure and drama of life in the wild, like no animal series before.**

2. **The Battle for Life is eternal and never-ending. It's a Battle for Survival, and the Rush to stay One Step Ahead – a Step that can be the Difference between Life and Death.**

3. **In this series we'll see how, Day and Night, the Drama is played out, and how the Race is Run…**

4. **We will follow some of the most iconic species in the world; such as Lions, Elephants, Cheetah, Hippos, Rhinos and Zebra. With the help of the latest scientific research we'll dramatize their strength, intelligence, the tricks they use, their natural weaponry. Whatever it takes to stay ahead - in the Race of Life!**

EPS 1 • SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

Short description : Survival of the fittest in the animal kingdom affects animals every second of every day of their lives. There are many examples in nature that can be excellent displays of adaptation of evolutionary history. Here are some examples :

Species : **Crocodiles • Sharks • Whales • Platypus • Bat • The Amazing Adaptable Frog • Armadillos • Tapir**

Synopsis : Animals adapt through a series of small, random mutations and usually do so in order to compete more effectively for food, water and space. With such strong competition between species, the animals that have certain adaptations are more likely to be stronger and therefore produce more young. Survival of the fittest in the animal kingdom is much more prominent and thus plays a larger role. It affects animals every second of every day of their lives. In a split moment they could die all because they were not the "fittest". It is the one that is most adaptable to change. In the struggle for survival, the fittest win out at the expense of their rivals because they succeed in adapting There are many examples in nature that can be excellent displays of survival of the fittest. Here are some examples of evolution in the race of life. Crocodiles are of an ancient lineage, they are believed to be 200 million years old, whereas dinosaurs became extinct 64 million years ago. Crocodiles have survived great extinction events, and outlived whatever wiped out the dinosaur. Incredible ability to adapt and survive in the Race of Life. They have a very slow metabolism, and can go up to a year with no food. They have a 4 chamber heart that helps them control their temperature, lungs that allow them to hold their breath underwater for up to 2 hours. Their coping mechanisms have enabled them to survive for over 200 million years.
Sharks have gone through the process of adaptation and evolutionary experimentation as well. The modern descendants of ancient sharks have incorporated many of the successful traits of the past. They have changed over time, but the changes have not been too extreme, only nature perfecting an originally near-perfect design. Their skin colour represents a type of camouflage called counter-shading. Great whites are dark grey on top and white on the bottom, which not only breaks up their outline in the water making them difficult to see, but they blend in with the darker sea-floor when viewed from above and the lighter surface when viewed from below. The upper jaw of sharks, including the great white, is not fused to the skull as it is with other vertebrates, but is held in place by flexible connective tissue. This allows the jaw to protrude outward from the head, extending its reach and bite radius! The great white is a highly visual hunter and it is believed they have acute colour vision Great whites have electroreceptors, which are sensory organs that allow them to detect hidden prey by means of sensing the minute electrical signals they give off. Great whites are unique among sharks in the sense that they are endothermic, which means they can regulate their blood temperature. Sharks, and specifically great whites, are fascinating representations of a perfect "survival of the fittest" and have been for millions of years.
Whale Adaptations : Whales are an amazing species that have evolved from land dwelling creatures millions of years ago to the marine mammals we know today. Over the course of their evolution whales have made many adaptations towards their oceanic lifestyle so that they could survive and thrive in the underwater world. To help them adapt to the ocean whales developed echolocation, thick layers of blubber, modified lungs, better hearing and larger arteries among other things to ensure their survival and prosperity. Other species in the episode: Platypus, Bat, The Amazing Adaptable Frog, Armadillos, Tapir ...

Eps 2 • THE BIG CATS

Short description : The big Cats, more than any other breed of animal, they have come to symbolize the predators. Sleek, dangerous, fast, and vicious. Revered for their beauty and vitality. They're some of the most feared predators in the world, but what techniques do they use to help them win the race of life ?

Species : **Lions • Cheetahs • Leopard • Snow Leopard • Jaguar • Tiger**

Synopsis : No-one runs the Race of Life faster than the Cheetah, and yet it is on the endangered species list. The Leopard is perhaps the best equipped survivor for the long run. With its population spread far beyond Sub-Saharan Africa. This success is probably to do with the fact they are 'opportunistic hunters'. And what of the Lion ? Known as the King of the Jungle, (even they don't live in them), lions hunt buffalos, giraffes, warthogs, wildebeests and zebras, and antelopes when the opportunity presents itself. Lions are high up on the food chain, the very centre of their food web, so have almost no predators. No matter how big and tough you are, when you run the Race of Life, you have to keep your wits about you. Another loner in the race of life, the snow leopard prefers to inhabit steep cliff areas, rocky outcrops and ravines. Such habitats provide them with the camouflage they need to ambush unsuspecting prey. To survive the race of life, in these harsh and cold environments, the snow leopard must be a clever and resourceful hunter. We leave the Snow Leopard and the great Asian mountains behind , and travel to the Americas, where the Cougar roam. Also known as mountain lions or pumas, cougars are agile and sleek, known for their habit of appearing from seemingly nowhere, and pouncing on their prey. The Tiger Solitary and beautiful, many cultures consider the tiger to also be a symbol of strength and courage. Every Big Cat born in the wild who survives to maturity can be said to be a winner, a winner in the Race of Life.

Eps 3 • THE GREAT DESERT RACE

Short description : Deserts are dry. Deserts are extreme. True deserts get less than 18 cm. of rain per year. True deserts have very few plants. Semidesert habitats have enough rainfall to support more plant and animal life. Deserts are not easy places for animals to live. Animals who live in them often have special features that help them survive in the Race of Life.

Species : **Scorpion • Ostrich • Lizard • Kangaroo Rat • Dung Beetles • Gila Monster • Rattlesnake • Viper**

Synopsis : Survival is everything in the desert, and surviving isn't easy. The heat and scarcity of food and water have made the critters that live here very tough and resourceful. Predators and preys have to overcome an animal's defenses and be efficient at it or they will not survive in the Race of Life. Desert animals have evolved to handle the desert's heat and lack of water. They have adapted their bodies and behaviors to the desert climate. Most can survive on small amounts of water and many get all of their water from their food. Some drink maybe once a week and travel considerable distances to find isolated waterholes and springs. Large animals seek shade during the hottest part of the day. Some animals dig a hollow depression into the ground and lie in the cooler soil while others are nocturnal. Many reptiles and other animals protect themselves from the extreme temperature by spending their time in burrows.

Eps 4 • HERBIVORES – WHEN MIGHT IS RIGHT

Short description : Large herbivores are vital to a healthy and balanced ecosystem. Apart from being excellent landscape-keepers and creators. How do these huge, but surprisingly swift beasts-in-armour ever win the Race of Life?

Species : **Elephant • Rhinoceros • Hippopotamus • Giraffe • Gorilla**

Synopsis : These are Nature's own Battletanks, and (with the exception of the Indian Elephant), all endemic to the African continent. How do these huge, but surprisingly swift beasts-in-armour ever win the Race of Life? Especially when they are such large creatures, but must subsist on a diet that even the strictest vegetarian would pass on! Well for one thing, most other animals get out of their way. But lions and hyenas are not always so easily moved – they prey on young, sick and old elephants in particular. This seemingly gentle giant has been revealed to have a darker side in the last few years too. They may survive on just plant life, but that doesn't mean they don't like a fight – to the death. Elephants have been observed attacking and killing Rhinos in the last 20 years. It's a savage clash. Meanwhile, the Rhino, a tough looking customer if ever there was one, is an endangered species. Then there's the hippopotamus. An adult hippo is a huge, aggressive animal, and even the largest crocodiles tend to stay away from it. However, when baby hippos stray from their mothers, then crocodiles, lions and hyenas will have a go if they can get away without being attacked themselves by adults in the baby hippo's herd. That's why baby hippos must stay close to Mum.

EPS 5 • NATURAL WARRIORS

Short description : Predators and preys, there is no lack of warriors among the ranks of wild animals. Males and females of most species will fight viciously in self-defense. And females, can be even more aggressive than males when defending their young. In this episode we'll explore the Race of Life from the point of view of food, territory, social status, and mates. These are the main reasons to be a warrior in the Race of Life.

Species : **Mountain lion • Wolves • Sea Lion • Elephant • Woodchuck • Squirrel**

Synopsis : There is no lack of warriors among the ranks of wild animals. There is also no lack of purpose behind their aggressive natures, whether they're on the offensive or the defensive. Prey becomes aggressive toward a predator usually to preserve its life—like a woodchuck biting ferociously when cornered by a coyote. Males and females of most species will fight viciously in self-defense. And females, can be even more aggressive than males when defending their young. Though some fights occur between two different species, most battles are fought between members of the same species. Though the wildlife warriors in these battles usually are not trying to kill each other, the fighting can result in death. Why would members of the same species fight with such ferocity? Food is one reason. Animals that store and horde food for survival will aggressively protect their pantries. A squirrel jealously guards its middens of nuts and seeds, attacking any squirrels that try to steal from its stores. And a mountain lion resting near a fresh deer kill will fearlessly attack another lion that approaches. Animals are also willing to fight to protect their food indirectly. For example, predators will defend a territory that provides them with enough prey, or food, to survive. This territorial aggression serves to space out members of a species across their range in a way that maintains sufficient food within each territory. But it also may limit population size. For example, if a pack of wolves cannot find, defend, or take over a suitable territory, the members may starve to death.
Though food, territory, social status, and mates may be won and kept by fighting, aggression takes its toll. Animal combatants face exhaustion, injuries, time away from resting and eating, and the ultimate cost of battle: death. Thus, it's in an animal's interest to win a war before it ever begins or to avoid a confrontation altogether.

EPS 6 • RUN LIKE THE WIND

Short description : All animals must eat to survive in the Race of life. With predators always on the lookout for a meal, prey must constantly avoid being eaten. Any adaptation the prey uses adds to the chances of survival for the species. Some adaptations are defense mechanisms which can give the prey an advantage against enemies. The first is very direct and comes naturally. Animals can use speed as a very effective means of escaping predators. Predators can't eat what they can't catch!

Species : **Antelope • Zebras • Wild Dogs • Cheetah • Thomson's gazelle • Rabbit • Fox • Deer**

Synopsis : In the evolutionary history of big herbivores and the carnivores that prey upon them, the phrase "arms race" is only technically a metaphor. Antelope and zebras are literally born to run, and many of the things that chase them, like wild dogs or cheetahs, are either masters of endurance or champion sprinters. You can keep yourself safe if you keep predators from getting too close. That's the idea behind animals that try to escape danger. They depend on speed or the ability to go where predators can't follow them. The evolutionary story almost writes itself: over millions of years of chasing, and being chased, whenever the predators evolved to become faster, the prey were selected to run even faster. Except of course there's more to life than running for your life. An antelope's frame is under more demands than evading cheetahs—it also needs to travel long distances to follow food availability with the shifting rainy season. And then again, not all predators run their prey down; lions, for instance, prefer to pounce from ambush. Gazelles typically frequent wide-open spaces and plains, where they browse on grasses, shoots, and leaves. Open plains make them visible to predators like cheetahs or wild dogs, but gazelles are fleet of foot. The Thomson's gazelle can reach speeds of 64 kilometers an hour. Grazing animals often feed in herds. When a predator attacks, the animals scatter and run in different directions which confuses the predator and allows the animals to escape. The rabbit runs faster than the fox, because the rabbit is running for his life ...The white-tailed deer does actually have white hair beneath its tail. In fact, the white-tailed deer lifts its tail in warning at the first sign of danger.
The deer's tail, bright white and almost a foot in length, flashes to tell other deer: "Get out of here!" Deer use speed and strength to escape danger. They run quickly, jumping over logs and streams. They leap left and right to confuse whatever is chasing them.

Eps 7 • THE EARLY BIRD (CATCHES THE WORM)

Short description : Predator versus prey: on aerial hunting and escape strategies in birds. In this episode we analyze three idealized attack-escape situations between bird predators and their prey : climbing flight escape, horizontal speeding, and turning and escape by diving.

Species : **Eagle • Falcon • Owl • Kestrel • Vulture**

Synopsis : Predator and prey attack-escape performance is likely to be the outcome of an evolutionary arms race. There is something about birds of prey that make us pay attention – maybe it is the inherent fear we all have that one will attack us – or perhaps it is just because they are seldom seen by most westerners. Regardless, birds of prey are fascinating to all and so we present this episode of some of the largest, mightiest and most spectacular raptors from around the world.

Eps 8 • REPTILLIAN

Short description : In this episode the group of scaly-skinned, backboned animals includes snakes, lizards, crocodiles and hard-shelled turtles. Most reptiles live on land, but turtles, crocodiles, and some snakes live in water. Let's discover how they face the Race of Life .

Species : **Lizards • Crocodile • Snakes • Turtles •**

Synopsis : Crocodiles , like all living reptiles, they are descended from animals that roamed the Earth about 250 million years ago. So when it comes to the Race of Life, they certainly have staying power. There's something so viscerally terrifying about these creatures that lay in wait for their prey, just under the waterline. They win the race by staying still, ever so still and then pounce. Turtles are among the most ancient of the reptiles alive today and have changed little since they first appeared some 200 million years ago. They have a protective shell that encloses their body and provides protection and camouflage. Turtles inhabit terrestrial, freshwater, and marine habitats and are found both in tropical and temperate regions. Poisonous or harmless, large or small, all snakes - from the desert rattlesnake to the dwarf pipe snake - have certain things in common: a long, thin shape; scaly, legless bodies; and unblinking, lidless eyes. Like all reptiles, snakes rely on the heat of the sun to control their body temperature. The venom of the king cobra, the world's largest poisonous snake, is strong enough to kill an elephant. It is possible for the Lizard to lose their tail when they feel that they are in danger. It can be a means of escaping from a predator. In time the tail will grow back again. The tail they leave behind will move and confuse the predator. What grows back will be slimmer and often a different color. For all these creatures cold blood can definitely be an asset in the Race of Life.

Eps 9 • DEFENSES IN THE RACE OF LIFE

Short description : Some with powerful strides and flashing teeth, some with poisons and tricks, it often seems that the predators have the upper hand in the race of life. This episode reveals an arsenal of strategies that preys use for their defense, which suggests that some prey are not as vulnerable as they may seem.

Species : **Zebras • Insects • Spiders • Chameleon • Frog • Skunk**

Synopsis : This episodes reveals the unique ways in which animals protect themselves. Throughout millions of years of evolution, animals have evolved numerous ways of defending themselves against predators. Obviously, being able to flee a predator is the choice of many prey animals we can consider. There are very interesting methods of defense which involve deception and chemistry. These include using toxic chemicals, camouflage, and mimicry. Insects that look like leaves, snakes that play dead, fish that fly, and toads with poisonous skin, these animals are among the many creatures that defend themselves in fascinating ways. Almost every animal is hunted as food by some other kind of animal and has developed ways to defend itself against predators. The relationship between predator and prey is a bit like an evolutionary arms race. As soon as one develops a weapon or defense mechanism, the other is working on an adaptation that allows them to circumvent that mechanism. Common defense mechanisms include claws, teeth, camouflage, poison, mimicry, and adaptations like echolocation. Spray Toxins & Foul Odors : Many animals will spray toxic or foul smelling liquids at predators.
That is enough electricity to be fatal to a human being. Avoiding Predation: Animals have many defense mechanisms to help them avoid predation. Many similar defenses have evolved in different species with slight variations. Camouflage, mimicry, and claws and teeth are extremely common in many species.

EPS 10 • Underwater Predators

Short description : An episode that tells the Race of Life of the underwater world of dangerous predators with razor-sharp teeth, terrible poisons and other weapons to catch.

Species : **Sharks • Moray Eels • Barracuda • Giant Squid • Stone Fish • Lion Fish •**

Synopsis : Almost all animals living in the sea are predators - from small fish to great white sharks and starfish to giant squid. Their bodies have been designed and built to capture prey and avoid becoming prey themselves. Raiders of the Underwater Universe have evolved to become more efficient war machines of our planet. There are "predators lurking" as rockfish, cleverly disguising themselves and wait for unsuspecting prey to wander too close. There are monkfish, hanging "bait" in an attempt to actively attract their prey within striking distance. Raiders of the Underwater Universe have evolved to become more efficient war machines of our planet. An episode that tells the Race of Life of the underwater world of dangerous predators with razor-sharp teeth, we will see sharks, barracuda and moray eels surrounding.

EPS 11 • Underwater Prey's defenses

Short description : This episode explores some of the adaptations, defenses and techniques used by various marine creatures to survive in the race of life.

Species : **Whale • Clown Fish • Squid • Nudibranch • Octopus • Jelly Fish**

Synopsis : The ocean can be a very difficult place for the Race of life. The animals living in the seas have to deal every moment with finding food, and protecting themselves from predators. There are many ways of hiding, defending, and feeding, and every different technique has advantages for different animals. This episode explores some of the adaptations used by various sea creatures to survive in the Race of Life. For example, some animals use camouflage to escape detection or to sneak up on their prey, while other animals have coloration which intentionally makes them stand out. Some creatures hide from predators, while others stay in groups out in the open, relying on protection in numbers. Some animals have dangerous spines or venom for protection, but even the most venomous creatures sometimes have predators. Different animals have taken advantage of different food sources, some feeding at the top of the food chain, and others at the bottom. So every animal is both predator, and prey. The Race of Life through underwater footage shot in the wild, how animals in the oceans have evolved to survive by adapting to their environment.

EPS 12 • THE RACE UNDERFOOT

Short description : There are many reasons why insects are so successful to survive. Their extraordinary ability to adapt in the race of life, allowing them to live in extreme ranges of temperatures and environments. In this episode we explore the Race of Life in the small size but sometimes bigger and cruel.

Species : **Dragonflies • The monarch butterfly • The praying mantis • The ambushing Portia • Bolas Spiders • Ant**

Synopsis : All insects go through the Race of Life where they metamorphose, changing from one form into another. They burrow through the ground, hop and sing in the trees, and dart and dance in the air. They come in many different colors and various shapes. Insects are extremely useful to humans, pollinating our crops as well as flowers in meadows, forests, deserts and other areas. There are many reasons why insects are so successful at surviving. Their amazing ability to adapt in the Race of Life, permits them to live in extreme ranges of temperatures and environments. A strong, hard but flexible shell called an exoskeleton covers their soft organs and is resistant to chemicals, water and physical impact. Their wings give them the option of flying away from dangerous situations or toward food or mates. In this episode : Dragonflies hover like helicopters over ponds and lakes, then suddenly dart away, pursuing prey or other dragonflies. Their long, narrow abdomen gives them the name "darning needles." A defense mechanism of a dragonfly is that it can fly very fast to fly away from danger. They also have very large eyes, so they can see predators coming. The monarch butterfly goes through a miraculous metamorphosis, changing from an egg to a hungry caterpillar to a quiet pupa and emerging as a beautiful winged adult.
All butterflies, moths, beetles and flies go through these life stages. The praying mantis is master of disguise. Its green body, wings and legs merge into the green, leafy background so carefully you think it is part of the grass. Perched at an angle, with its spiny forelegs raised in a prayerlike pose, the mantis sits in still rigidness -- until an insect comes too near and is suddenly captured and devoured. Ants, like bees, hornets and wasps, are social insects and live together in colonies in many-chambered nests. Ants construct their nests with mazes of tunnels, galleries and rooms for storing food, laying eggs and raising young. Ants have several predators, therefore, they have adapted several defense mechanisms and strategies to protect themselves against their enemies:Ants are equipped with a nasty sting/bite that secretes formic acid, which is highly irritant. Some ants block the entrance to their nest with their head in a process called phragmosis. This prevents enemies form infiltrating the nest.Ants use their powerful mandibles to throw small intruders out of the nest and these mandibles can also snap shut when they are in defense mode.

EPS 13 • THE RACE OF LIFE AFTER THE DARK

Short description : In this episode, we find out more about the animals that live in the shadows and the adaptations they need to survive. Nocturnal preys have taken to this dark world for good reason: they escape predators, avoid the heat of the day, and take their turn sharing food and resources in their 'niche'. But to navigate life in the dark, you need some special abilities to cope with the lack of light.

Species : **Ring-tailed possum, Kangaroo Rat, Quoll, Tasmanian Devil, Foxes, Porcupines, Paccoons, Mice, Cats.**

Synopsis : The Race of Life continues even when the sun goes down. Nocturnal animals are active mainly at night rather than during the day. Which animals come out at night? How do they find food in the dark? Where do they go during the day? As over-sized eyes help tarsiers see at night? How do bats find food in the dark? These nocturnal animals have some fascinating ways to survive in the dark at the Race of Life. Spend the night on an exploration with foxes, porcupines, raccoons, fish, mice, and more as their day begins, while the rest of the world is fast asleep. We pass through the night on a snow owl, slipping over meadows, lakes, forests and rivers, and it is in this case the moon that illuminates the Race of Life of these mysterious creatures.