

#8789

KENYAN WILDLIFE VET

Grade Levels: 7-11

26 minutes

NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA 1999

DESCRIPTION

Dr. Tom deMaar is a wildlife veterinarian at Ol Jogi wildlife sanctuary in Kenya. He shares his philosophy of conservation and his experiences treating gazelles, leopards, rhinos, and any other animal in need. Features a leopard hunting, elephants, giraffes, and deMaar's educational emphasis to local children.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area: Physical Systems

- ◆ Standard: Understands the characteristics of ecosystems on Earth's surface
 - Benchmark: Knows plants and animals associated with various vegetation and climatic regions on Earth (e.g., the plant and animal life supported in a midlatitude forest in North America, the kinds of plants and animals found in a tropical rain forest in Africa, animals and trees that thrive in cities)

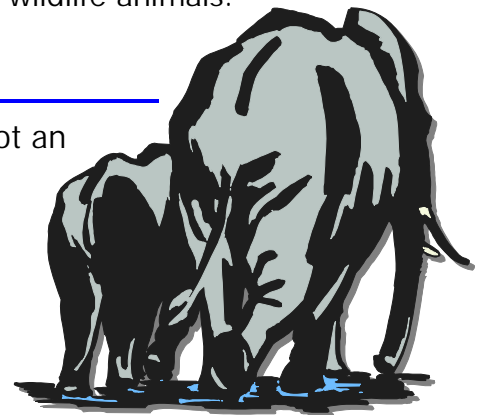
INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To know the effects of ecosystem change on the creatures that inhabit central Kenya.
2. To discuss possible illnesses that afflicts wild animals.
3. To develop a sense of responsibility and respect towards wildlife animals.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Dr. Tom deMaar sees himself as an ecosystem doctor, not an animal doctor. He studies the effects of ecosystem change on the creatures that inhabit Ol Jogi in central Kenya. It's a place where animals that once ranged freely over much of Africa are safe from predators and human encroachment.

Today, like endangered species around the world, the animals survive in small, biological islands. Much of Ol Jogi is fenced in for protection, but the rest is open. By looking at differences between the animals on each side of the fence, deMaar hopes to learn about the effects of such safe enclaves on the wild animals inside. Is their nutrition sufficient? Do new diseases spread among them? Are there even changes to their DNA?



DeMaar notes that we know very little about the illnesses that afflict wild animals. We are ignorant about what kills wildlife.

Ironically, many of the locals have never seen the fabled wildlife for which Africa is known around the world. And conservation means little to them when a leopard attacks the sheep and goats on which they depend for survival. DeMaar knows that if the animals of Africa are going to survive in the wild, their human neighbors must make peace with them. By organizing educational visits to the Ol Jogi orphanage, where abandoned or injured animals are cared for, he hopes to cultivate a sense of responsibility and respect towards animals such as leopards, gazelles, and rhinos.

BEFORE SHOWING

1. Locate Mount Kenya (which stands near the Ol Jogi reserve) on a map.
2. What do you think are some of the differences between the work of an ordinary North American vet and the work of a wildlife vet in East Africa?



AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. Discuss Dr. deMaar's statement: "Humans can take care of themselves. They make a mess of their own lives; that's their problem. With animals, they may not have that luxury. And since humans have such impact on all of animal life, all around the world, it is humanity's responsibility to take care of the animals."
2. Imagine that you are a subsistence farmer. For the last month, families in your community have been losing animals to a predator. One night, you catch an endangered carnivore killing one of your goats. Would killing the predator be justifiable?
3. A herd of elephants can leave what looks like a trail of destruction. What kind of damage do elephants do? How is this "damage" actually helpful to the ecosystem?

RELATED RESOURCES



Captioned Media Program

- I Talk to Animals: A Portrait of Samantha Khury #7741
- Kenya: The Masai Homeland #3622
- So You Want to Be? Salesperson/Veterinarian #8903

World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and “kid-safe” sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **VETERINARIAN**

<http://www.review.com/career/careerprofile.cfm?id=163>

Learn about this profession, such as a day in the life of a vet, associated careers, career profile, and contains contact information of such major associations.

- **WILDNETAFRICA**

<http://www.wildnetafrika.co.za/wildlife/intro.html>

Experience wildlife, help wildlife, learn about wildlife, and many other topics.

- **KENYAWEB**

<http://www.kenyaweb.com/>

Read about the history of Kenya, its economy, regions, and several other topics about this country.

