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Nature: Nature's Miracle Orphans ***Panelist Biographies***

Sam Trull

Co-founder and Director of The Sloth Institute, Costa Rica

Sam Trull was born and raised in Durham, North Carolina, and says her passion for working with animals started as a teenage volunteer at Duke University's Duke Lemur Center. She worked there for over a decade while completing a degree in zoology from North Carolina State University in 2003. She later received a Master of Science degree in primate conservation in 2006 from Oxford Brookes University in the UK.

After multiple expeditions to Madagascar, West Africa, and Central America, Trull settled in Costa Rica in January 2013. She became wildlife manager at Kids Saving the Rainforest (KSTR), a nonprofit organization that helps rehabilitate animals in the Manuel Antonio area of the country along the central Pacific coast. This is where the "Nature's Miracle Orphans" segments were filmed.

During her tenure, Trull realized her passion for working with sloths, so in August of 2014, she co-founded and is the current director of [The Sloth Institute](http://TheSlothInstitute.org), whose mission is to enhance the welfare and conservation of captive and wild sloths through research and education. The Sloth Institute collaborates with KSTR with their sloth rescue/rehabilitation and release program. She is also a photographer whose specialty is images of wildlife conservation. Her first photo book, *Slothlove*, is being published by Inkshares and will be available at the end of 2015.

Mark Wheeler

Producer

Although London is his birthplace, Mark Wheeler attributes his family's move to Bristol in southwest England shortly thereafter as the reason for developing a keen love of the natural world. He recalls childhood days spent building wildlife ponds, worm gardens, exploring ant nests and taking photos of tadpoles with a Kodak Brownie camera. After receiving his degree in advanced biology at Liverpool John Moores University, Wheeler led research expeditions into the forests of Vietnam and the Philippines.

In between these trips, he taught visitors to the Bristol Science Centre, one of the United Kingdom's leading interactive science and natural history institutions, which continued to influence his career path and prove, in his words, why "wildlife is so very blooming cool." As luck would have it, the Natural History Unit of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is also based in Bristol, so after several attempts to secure a two-week internship, Wheeler was successful. Two weeks turned into 18 months and then a research job on "Saving Plant Earth," a series about the world's most endangered species.

Wheeler says his projects have taken him all over the world, but that surprisingly, he had never been to the United States until this year. He's been to Alaska twice to film an upcoming PBS/BBC co-production about the migration of the porcupine caribou herd. Says Wheeler, "One thing that this crazy journey has taught me is that in wildlife filmmaking, it never just rains, it pours!"

Fred Kaufman

Executive Producer, *Nature*

For two decades, Fred Kaufman has been a leading executive in the natural history genre. As the executive producer of the acclaimed *Nature* series, Kaufman has won multiple Emmy and Peabody Awards. He has been with the series since the beginning and overseen it since 1991. During his tenure, *Nature* has been honored with almost 700 industry awards. In 2012, Kaufman was named the recipient of the International Wildlife Film Festival's Lifetime Achievement Award for Media. He was honored with the coveted Grand Teton Award for *Broken Tail: A Tiger's Last Journey*, given at the 2011 Jackson Wildlife Film Festival, the festival's highest honor. In 2010, he accepted the Outstanding Achievement Award from the prestigious Wildscreen Film Festival in Bristol, England. It was the first time in the 20-year history of the festival that the award was presented to an American series. In 2009, Kaufman was executive producer of *The Legend of Pale Male*, an award-winning feature documentary that chronicled the legendary hawk that nested on a Fifth Avenue building in New York City, and the life-changing events that followed.

Many of *Nature*'s most memorable presentations have been produced under Kaufman's stewardship, including *Bears of the Last Frontier*; *Christmas in Yellowstone*; *Deep Jungle*; *AFRICA*; *Hummingbirds: Magic in the Air*; *Dogs That Changed the World*; *My Life as a Turkey*; *Inside the Animal Mind*; *Echo: An Elephant to Remember*; and *Cloud: Wild Stallion of the Rockies*.

In 2006, Kaufman won a George Foster Peabody Award for *The Queen of Trees*, a high-definition portrait of the relationship between the tiny fig wasp and the giant fig tree. In 2008, Kaufman won a second Peabody Award for *Silence of the Bees*, which looked at the global crisis of the disappearing honeybees.

In 2007, he wrote and co-produced *The Best of Nature: 25 Years*, a successful fundraising show for PBS that looked back at the highlights of the series' first 25 years. In 2002, he created and executive produced an urban wildlife series for kids called *Wild TV*. Then in 1994, he executive produced *In the Wild*, a series of wildlife specials featuring celebrities. Memorable shows from

that series included *Dolphins With Robin Williams*, *In the Lion's Den With Anthony Hopkins*, *Elephants With Goldie Hawn* and *Orangutans With Julia Roberts*, which won a Genesis Award for best PBS documentary.

To develop and fund programming, Kaufman has forged major international co-production partnerships with the BBC and National Geographic Television, and has collaborated with the Monterey Bay Aquarium and the San Diego Zoo and Wild Animal Park. He continues to work with filmmakers and scientists from around the world.

Kaufman is a member of the Director's Guild of America and the Writer's Guild of America. A graduate of the State University of New York at Binghamton, he is a resident of Westchester County, New York.

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