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Press Materials: pbs.org/pressroom or thirteen.org/pressroom

Nature: Lions of the Skeleton Coast

Premieres Wednesday, November 13 at 8/7c on PBS ([check local listings](#)), pbs.org/nature, [YouTube](#) and the [PBS App](#)

Synopsis:

In this captivating tale, lion researcher Dr. Philip Stander follows three orphaned desert lion cubs as they navigate the harsh realities of survival in one of the world's most unforgiving places, Namibia's brutal Skeleton Coast. Stander's passion for these majestic creatures began 40 years ago, when he encountered a lone desert lioness on the Coast shores. But the desert lions soon disappeared from the region, and more than a decade later, he discovers a female cub called "Queen" whose life unlocks the survival secrets of desert lions. One day tragedy strikes the Queen's three granddaughters who become unexpectedly orphaned, and they embark on a harrowing journey through the empty desert facing starvation. Stander documents their every move, revealing the unique and complex relationship between land and marine predators.

Long TV Listing:

Lion researcher Dr. Philip Stander follows three orphaned desert lion cubs as they navigate the brutal Skeleton Coast of Namibia. Watch the cubs learn to adapt, hunt, and defy the odds of survival in this vast desert territory.

Short TV Listing:

Follow three orphaned desert lion cubs as they navigate the brutal Skeleton Coast of Namibia.

Noteworthy Moments:

- More than 30 years ago, conservationist Dr. Philip Stander gave up his way of life to become a desert nomad in Namibia, where he began following one exceptional lioness known as The Queen and her litter of cubs.
- The Queen fought a male leopard, but the leopard inflicted such severe injuries that she succumbed to them and died a few days later.
- The Queen's three desert lion cubs - Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie - were waiting for their mother, who wasn't going to return. As a result, they had stopped playing and were waiting to die. Play is a fundamental part of their upbringing; it is a key element in developing their hunting skills and fostering social bonds, which is crucial to their survival.

- Hunger overshadowed the cubs' longing to be with their mother, so they sought out their aunt in hopes she could be their new guardian. Their aunt attacked the cubs and would not accept them.
- Chased by their aunt into an inhospitable part of the desert, the cubs found an oasis where they developed new hunting strategies and became bird hunters, which was previously unheard of for lions. Since they were sharing small portions of food, it created tension between the sisters. Charlie eventually crossed the dunes and never returned.
- Charlie once again met their aunt, who had aggressively ousted her and her sisters. Her aunt now welcomed the companionship and mentored Charlie, showing her how to hunt larger prey like giraffes.
- Alpha and Bravo reached the ocean and made the Skeleton Coast their new home, where they learned how to hunt and eat a new set of prey from the marine ecosystem.
- The desert went through an extreme drought and the aunt eventually died. Alpha, the first of the sisters, became a mother and continues the legacy of coastal desert lions.

Series Overview:

Since 1982, **Nature** has brought the natural world to millions of viewers, pioneering a television genre that is now widely emulated in the broadcast industry. The series has won more than 800 honors from the television industry, the international wildlife film communities and environmental organizations, including 21 Emmys and three Peabodys. Consistently among the most-watched primetime series on PBS, **Nature** continues to innovate through original digital programming, such as the Anthem Award-winning podcast [Going Wild with Dr. Rae Wynn-Grant](#) and digital series [Animal IQ](#) and [Untold Earth](#). **Nature's** award-winning website, pbs.org/nature, features full episodes, short films, digital series, behind-the-scenes content, news articles, educational resources and more.

Nature is available for streaming concurrently with broadcast on all station-branded PBS platforms, including [PBS.org](https://pbs.org) and the [PBS App](#), available on iOS, Android, Roku streaming devices, Apple TV, Android TV, Amazon Fire TV, Samsung Smart TV, Chromecast and VIZIO. Classic episodes are available on various [FAST channel platforms](#) and on [PBS Passport](#).

Production Credits:

A film by Will and Lianne Steenkamp, **Nature: Lions of the Skeleton Coast** is a production of The WNET Group, ORF, Into Nature Productions, Kurt Mayer Film, WDR and ARTE. The documentary is narrated by Noma Dumezweni with Dr. Philip Stander and filmed by Lianne and Will Steenkamp. Will Steenkamp and Kurt Mayer are Executive Producers. For **Nature**, Fred Kaufman is Executive Producer. Bill Murphy is Series Producer. Janet Hess is Series Editor. Danielle Broza is Digital Content & Strategy Lead. **Nature** is a production of The WNET Group.

Underwriters:

Support for **Nature: Lions of the Skeleton Coast** is provided by in part by Perpetual Kindness Foundation and Sun Hill Renewal Fund. Series funding for **Nature** is made possible in part by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, The Arnhold Family in memory of Henry and Clarisse Arnhold, The Fairweather Foundation, Sue and Edgar Wachenheim III, Kate W. Cassidy Foundation, Kathy Chiao and Ken Hao, Charles Rosenblum, Sarah and Sandra Lyu in memory of Seung and Dorothy Lyu, Colin S. Edwards, Filomen M. D'Agostino Foundation, Lillian Goldman Charitable Trust, Gregg Peters Monsees Foundation, Koo and Patricia Yuen, Sandra Atlas Bass, and public television viewers.

Websites:

pbs.org/nature; facebook.com/PBSNature; twitter.com/PBSNature; instagram.com/pbsnature; youtube.com/naturepbs, tiktok.com/@pbsnature, #NaturePBS

About The WNET Group

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