

www.bbc.co.uk/nature



- Why are mammals so intelligent? Users can test their human learning abilities under pressure in the Bushbaby Memory Maze.

- Why can mammals develop such complex social behaviour? Figure out who's who in the Chimp Challenge.

The website also features two webcams allowing people to take part in interactive mammal experiments (as well as being fun to watch!). In November, the first webcam follows the development of a nest of baby mice and a litter of kittens from birth to weaning – viewers are encouraged to help us monitor their progress by clicking on specific buttons if they see the mother feeding her youngsters. In January, the second webcam watches a specially set-up BBC 'Squirrel Assault Course'. Users watch as the squirrels learn how to get to a stash of nuts. Again, viewers are encouraged to chart their progress by clicking on specific buttons.

BBCi's comprehensive website at www.bbc.co.uk/nature extends *The Life Of Mammals* seamlessly from TV to the web. Whilst the TV series takes viewers on a guided tour of the vast wealth and diversity of mammals, the website explores the reasons why mammals have been so successful. Throughout transmission, the website will be updated weekly to include in-depth written articles and new interactive challenges and competitions. Each of these will highlight a different aspect of mammal biology in the form of a game:

- Why can mammals adapt to so many different habitats? Try surviving as a fox in a range of habitats in the Survival Zone Challenge.

- Why can mammals eat so many different things? Explore the diversity of mammal diets in the Beast Feast Challenge.

- Why do mammals come in such a range of shapes and sizes? Discover what's really under their skin with the Mammal Maker Challenge.

As well as having fact files on every mammal featured in the TV series, the website has an innovative multimedia area – Mammals Up





Close. This takes 10 mammals from the series and links them by similarities viewers might never have imagined existed. Pictures, gripping stories and more than an hour of streamed video reveal some of the most fascinating mammal behaviours and bring some of the best footage from the BBC Natural History Unit to users' desktops.

The site also gives users unparalleled access to 'behind the scenes' stories from *The Life Of Mammals* series, including webchats with Sir David Attenborough and members of the production team, whilst the accompanying *Life On Air* website celebrates David Attenborough's 50 years in television.

"We hope visitors will play, explore and participate in *The Life Of Mammals* website. It is packed with interactive challenges, competitions, webcams, and videos, bringing visitors closer than ever to both familiar and really unusual mammals – you'll be surprised and, we hope, delighted." says website designer Lisa Sargood.

Note: BBCi is the name for the BBC's interactive services across the web, interactive TV and personal organisers.

The Life Of Mammals website/ The Life Of Mammals On Tour

The Life Of Mammals On Tour

BBC Learning is taking *The Life Of Mammals* on the road with a touring exhibition visiting Science and Discovery Centres between January and March 2003, including The Natural History Museum in London. The exhibition gives a behind-the-scenes look at how the series was made – with talks from the programme-makers, previously unseen footage and opportunities to sample online and interactive content. It will also offer a range of exciting "hands-on" exhibits and activities, giving families the chance to examine mammal behaviour and to see how, as humans, they belong to the world of mammals.

Tour dates – 2003

8-12 January(tbc)

The Natural History Museum, London

16-19 January

At Bristol, Bristol

23-26 January

Glasgow Science Centre

30 January-2 February

W5, Belfast

14-19 February

Think Tank, Birmingham

21-24 February

Techniquest, Cardiff

26 February-2 March

Centre for Life - Newcastle

7-16 March

Manchester Museum of Science & Industry

See website for further details



The Life Of Mammals Teacher's Activity Pack

The Life Of Mammals is set to capture the imagination of primary school children around the country. To accompany the series, BBC Educational Publishing has produced *The Life Of Mammals Teacher's Activity Pack* for teachers to use in class with their pupils, the first time that content from a major BBC Natural History series has been especially adapted for use in schools.

The content of the pack reflects the format and subject matter of the series. Featuring many of the captivating TV moments, it gives children the opportunity to explore further with their teacher. The emphasis throughout is to capture the natural enthusiasm and interest that children have for animals, and to harness this through the activities to simultaneously deliver key curriculum objectives in several subject areas including Science, Geography, Art and Literacy.

David Attenborough explains further: "Mammals are probably the most popular of all animals. There are some 10,000 different species and during the series we travel the world to discover just how varied and how astonishing they really are. Many children will watch the programmes at home with their parents and will find the journey an intriguing one; the activity pack allows them to consolidate in class what they have seen on television."

Written by Penny Coltman, Lecturer in Education at Cambridge University, the pack is primarily for children aged 7-11, Key Stage 2, although some of the activities can be adapted for younger children too.

Schools can order the pack and videos/DVDs of the television series by calling 0870 830 8000.

Open University Short Course

Working with the BBC, the Open University has developed a new course – Studying Mammals – for viewers who are inspired by the series and want to learn more. Starting in May 2003, the course gives the public the opportunity to learn more about these diverse and fascinating animals.

The course includes the study of mammalian social habits, their modes of feeding and reproduction, how they differ biologically from other animals and to what extent human interference and exploitation threaten their survival. The mammals covered range from the familiar – such as cats, dogs and foxes – to the rare, exotic and spectacular – tigers, whales and polar bears. Particular attention is paid to the approaches that scientists use to find out more information about mammals.

Studying Mammals requires about 100 hours of part-time study at home and can be taken on a one-off basis or as part of a qualification. Course materials include *The Life Of Mammals* book, TV programmes (on video or DVD) and a specially written course book and study guide.

For more information visit
www.open.ac.uk/science/short