

**NEW SMITHSONIAN CHANNEL™ LIMITED SERIES FEATURES AFRICA'S
MOST ICONIC PREDATORS AND THEIR TALES OF SURVIVAL**

AFRICA'S WILD HAVENS

PREMIERES WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31 AT 8 PM ET/PT

NEW YORK, AUGUST 26, 2016 – A new Smithsonian Channel three-part series tells stories of endurance and survival of Africa's most iconic symbols of natural history. Three ultimate predators - a pride of lions, a territorial leopard, and a cheetah mother - play out their lives in the shadows of three impressive trees: the sausage tree in Zambia, the camelthorn tree in South Africa, and the marula tree in the Manyeleti. AFRICA'S WILD HAVENS premieres Wednesday, August 31 at 8 p.m. ET/PT.

Each episode of AFRICA'S WILD HAVENS was filmed using the latest technology, including drones for aerial shots and time-lapse cameras to capture behaviors and action that can't be seen by the naked eye. Remote cameras were placed in trees to capture, from the perspective of the tree, animals in and under it.

The premiere episode, AFRICA'S WILD HAVENS: SAUSAGE TREE looks at the predators and animals that live in Nsefu along Zambia's Luangwa River. A leopard who shares her territory with a pride of lions and their nine cubs, finds the perfect place to ambush her prey. Powerful lionesses hunt down a warthog and a buffalo and introduce their two-month-old cubs to their first solid meal. In the river, hippo bulls fight to claim a part of the river, and crocodiles feed on the body of the loser. The harsh reality brought on by a winter drought plays out in the shade of the sausage tree, which provides a lifeline to the hippos, giraffes, elephants, antelopes and baboons of the area. Large fruits and crimson flowers keep the herbivores well-fed when other vegetation is withered and dry.

Ensuuing episodes of AFRICA'S WILD HAVENS:

AFRICA'S WILD HAVENS: CAMELTHORN TREE

Premieres Wednesday, September 7 at 8 p.m. ET/PT

This episode tracks the mammals, birds and insects that live in the harsh Kalahari Desert in Tswalu, South Africa. Years of evolution have given these predators and herbivores the tools to beat the desert's extremes: bodies that survive on the smallest amount of water, mechanisms that fool the brain into thinking it's not as hot as it really is, and ways to keep warm in the freezing nights. Cheetahs are perfectly adapted to this environment because they don't need to drink much, getting most of the hydration they need by drinking the blood of their prey. The camelthorn tree is a world of its own, with a root system so deep that it does not rely on rain to bloom and germinate, and with seed pods so large that they're an energy-packed meal for many herbivores. Its shade is much cooler than the sun-scorched sand of this semi-desert, and the wood is so strong that it

supports an architectural masterpiece, the sociable weaver's nest, which is the largest single structure built by a little bird.

AFRICA'S WILD HAVENS: MARULA TREE

Premieres Wednesday, September 7 at 8 p.m. ET/PT

The series finale goes to the Manyeleti Nature Reserve near the famous Kruger National Park in South Africa. There, in the heart of the African Savanna is the marula tree. It is known as the Tree of Life because it provides the human and wild inhabitants of Africa with life's staples – food, shelter and medicine. This is a tough landscape, where survival is a vicious competition in which only the strongest and most cunning survive. Large cats carve out their territories to suit their lifestyle. A coalition of cheetah brothers takes to the open plains where they survey the herds from the rise of an old termite mound. Young Tintswalo lions follow their parents and learn to hunt the larger herbivorous buffalos that come to the Manyeleti from the Kruger to find water. All these scenes play out under the tall marula trees that dot the savannah.

AFRICA'S WILD HAVENS is produced by Obsessively Creative and Smithsonian Networks in association with ARTE France, Animal Planet International, and the Department of Trade and Industry of South Africa. Joy Galane and David Royle serve as executive producers for Smithsonian Channel.

Smithsonian Channel™, owned by Smithsonian Networks™, a joint venture between Showtime Networks Inc. and the Smithsonian Institution, is where curiosity lives, inspiration strikes and wonders never cease. This is the place for awe-inspiring stories, powerful documentaries and amazing entertainment across multiple platforms. Smithsonian Channel combines the storytelling prowess of SHOWTIME® with the unmatched resources and rich traditions of the Smithsonian, to create award-winning programming that shines new light on popular genres such as air and space, history, science, nature, and pop culture. Among the network's offerings are series including *Aerial America*, *Million Dollar American Princesses*, *The Weapon Hunter*, *Mighty Ships*, *Mighty Planes* and *Air Disasters*, as well as critically-acclaimed specials that include *Civil War 360*, *9/11: The Heartland Tapes*; *MLK: The Assassination Tapes* and *The Day Kennedy Died*. Smithsonian Networks also operates Smithsonian Earth™, through SN Digital LLC., a new subscription video streaming service delivering spectacular original nature and wildlife content. To learn more, go to www.smithsonianchannel.com, or connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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