



NEWS

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NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL PRESENTS THE REMARKABLE JOURNEY OF A MAN AND HIS 800-POUND GRIZZLY BEST FRIEND

Naturalist Casey Anderson and Brutus the Bear Shed Light on the Fate of Yellowstone's Vulnerable "Island" Population of Grizzlies in *Expedition Grizzly featuring Casey Anderson*

"From my very first encounter, I've been fascinated by this amazing animal. The more I learned, the more I wanted to share their story."

Expedition Grizzly featuring Casey Anderson Premieres Sunday, May 3, 2009, at 9 PM ET/PT

(WASHINGTON, D.C. — APRIL 6, 2009) He towers 6 inches taller than Shaquille O'Neal. He has a bite force strong enough to crush a bowling ball. He could kill a human with a single paw. He is an 800-pound grizzly bear named Brutus and the curious best friend to renowned naturalist Casey Anderson, who has raised him since birth. Together, they've set out on a yearlong mission to chronicle the lives of Yellowstone's vulnerable grizzly bears — mysterious beasts that have elicited fear and respect among humans through the ages.

On Sunday, May 3, 2009, at 9 p.m. ET/PT, National Geographic Channel's **Expedition Grizzly featuring Casey Anderson** presents the unique story of one man who has dedicated himself to wildlife preservation and a daring approach to understanding grizzlies' every move — living among them in extreme conditions, observing their behaviors and even tasting some of their favorite foods. Driven by compassion, Casey and Brutus take a yearlong odyssey to shed light on Yellowstone's "island" population of about 600 grizzlies, hemmed in on all sides by roads and human settlement. Casey is concerned about the health of this grizzly population and whether climate change could be threatening their food supply. Throughout the seasons, Casey observes survival strategies of these grizzlies from a distance, while Brutus demonstrates up-close grizzly anatomy, strength and behavior.

Told in the first person, **Expedition Grizzly featuring Casey Anderson** gives viewers an awe-inspiring glimpse deep inside the grizzlies' wilderness with stunning HD footage filmed in some of Yellowstone's most treacherous, beautiful and remote terrain. There, Casey hopes to help protect and preserve the grizzlies' precious environment and provide the human world and the natural world a rare chance to see eye to eye.

As Casey says, "From my very first encounter, I've been fascinated by this amazing animal. The more I learned, the more I wanted to share their story. And the story of these particular bears — the Yellowstone grizzlies — is a little-known chapter in U.S. history."

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Nicknamed the "animal magnet" as a kid, Casey grew up in Montana surrounded by wilderness and animals. After college, he became an animal keeper and trainer at wildlife parks, traveling to elephant orphanages in Kenya, hanging out with crocodiles and even getting thrashed by a mountain lion. Then baby Brutus came into his life. Brutus was born in an overpopulated wildlife park. Casey rescued him from being euthanized and built a new sanctuary just for Brutus. A natural performer, Brutus was comfortable around people, making him a perfect assistant to teach park visitors about grizzly anatomy and conservation — and starring in educational videos and even feature films and television shows. Today, Brutus is a 6-year-old in his prime and continues to be Casey's best pal. When they are not on set, the two spend their days at the Montana Grizzly Encounter, a bear rescue and education facility that Casey founded in 2004. "Brutus has been a huge part of my life. He's sort of like, well he actually was, my best man."

The greater Yellowstone ecosystem is home to the southernmost grizzlies left in North America. Cut off, small "island" populations like this one are at risk of extinction due to sudden changes in climate and food sources, disease and mismanagement. And once an island population is gone, natural recovery is nearly impossible.

In an effort to learn how these bears survive on this ecological island, Casey leaves Brutus at home and tracks them deep in Yellowstone's grizzly country, attempting to piece together an annual picture of their lives. Throughout the special, each journey with Casey to study the grizzlies is juxtaposed with up-close demonstrations of grizzly behavior by Brutus back home. First, near winter's end, Casey heads out to observe the grizzly island population as they begin to emerge after hibernation, which takes its toll on the grizzlies, who lose up to 30 percent of their body weight. In spring, Casey travels back to identify adolescent bears as they return to forage in the same meadow year after year. And simultaneously, Brutus demonstrates a grizzly's remarkable sense of smell — seven times stronger than a bloodhound's — as he digs 3 feet in the ground to find a buried piece of salmon. In early summer, Casey returns to the park in the season of abundance to witness grizzlies preying on newborn elk calves and other animals.

In late summer, we follow Casey back into the remote alpine areas of Yellowstone to spot the annual wildlife migration that plays a critical role in the vitality of the Yellowstone grizzly. The stakes are high: As winter approaches, time is running out for them to store calories, much of which surprisingly comes from moths — grizzlies eat up to 40,000 in one day, flicking their tongues like anteaters. Tensions run high among the male bears as they move enormous boulders to find sleeping moths, competing for prime moth real estate. Back home, Brutus exhibits the bears' incredible strength when he easily moves a 1,800-pound boulder. Then Casey tries his own demonstration when he tastes the grizzlies' moth cuisine for himself: "Here it goes down the hatch. It's actually pretty good. Tastes like peanuts."

But to Casey's concern, climate change could affect the timing and location of the moths' migration — leading to a major disruption in the grizzlies' food supply. It's a striking example of how small things can have a huge impact on the vulnerable island populations. Casey believes we need to do more as a society to ensure their survival: "An island population is never truly safe from extinction ... for starters, we can reconnect this island territory to the remainder of North America's grizzly country. We can also continue to monitor the health of the grizzly population and the overall fitness of the Yellowstone ecosystem as a whole. Someday, the grizzly may reclaim a good portion of its natural range." But until then, best friends Casey and Brutus will continue teaching the world about the legendary Yellowstone grizzly and working tirelessly to protect them.

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The original score for **Expedition Grizzly featuring Casey Anderson** was composed by *Cloud Cult* front man Craig Minowa. In 2008, Minowa's band was listed as a notable "breaking band" in *Rolling Stone*, and *Spin* featured them as up-and-coming artists. They are also known for their dedication to sustainability and environmentalism. Minowa's modern and eclectic styles, which range from orchestral to electronic, give the film a distinct and unique musical signature.

Expedition Grizzly featuring Casey Anderson is produced by Grizzly Creek Films, LLC, for National Geographic Channel. Presenter is Casey Anderson. Executive producers are Leslie M. Gaines, Mailande Becker Holland and Thomas Winston. For National Geographic Channel, executive producer is Michael Welsh; senior vice president, special programming, is Michael Cascio; and executive vice president of content is Steve Burns.

For more information on Casey Anderson, visit natgeotv.com/grizzly.

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National Geographic Channel

Based at the National Geographic Society headquarters in Washington, D.C., the National Geographic Channel (NGC) is a joint venture between National Geographic Ventures (NGV) and Fox Cable Networks (FCN). Since launching in January 2001, NGC initially earned some of the fastest distribution growth in the history of cable and more recently the fastest ratings growth in television. The network celebrated its fifth anniversary January 2006 with the launch of NGC HD which provides the spectacular imagery that National Geographic is known for in stunning high-definition. NGC has carriage with all of the nation's major cable and satellite television providers, making it currently available in nearly 70 million homes. For more information, please visit www.natgeotv.com.

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