

Insider News

ISLANDS OF WONDER

MADAGASCAR, BORNEO, AND HAWAII

Just imagine — an island formed 90 million years ago when it was torn from east Africa and cast adrift. Madagascar is the oldest island on earth. It is just one of the fascinating locations you'll visit in this three-part series.

Isolated from the rest of the world, Madagascar, Borneo, and Hawaii are home to remarkable wildlife and unique human cultures found nowhere else on earth. The islands' fragile ecosystems also serve as an essential gauge for the planet's ecological health.

Through millennia, life on Madagascar had the time to evolve in strange and wondrous ways. Ring-tailed lemurs are direct descendants of the very first mammals to arrive on the western coast, and a remnant population of endangered greater bamboo lemurs clings to existence in southeastern Madagascar. To the east, many of the species of hedgehog-like mammals called tenrecs developed adaptive spiny bristles.

In the heart of Southeast Asia lies the tropical island of Borneo. The third largest island in the world, it is also one of the most biodiverse islands on earth — with flora and fauna both beautiful and bizarre, including carnivorous plants and lizards called flying dragons that can soar 30 feet. Occupying a huge variety of habitats, from bustling coral reefs and ancient jungles to towering mountains, more than 60,000 species of plants and animals live here.

For many human inhabitants, it's a struggle just to survive, but the extreme challenges have led to ingenious adaptations. Seafaring nomads called the

Bajau Laut, "People of the Sea," were drawn to some of the richest coral reefs in the world. Over generations they developed a mastery of the ocean to find food below the surface. After centuries living at sea, they have capabilities that include tremendous control of their breathing and the ability to dive to depths of over 200 feet, making them the ultimate human divers.

For 10,000 years, Borneo's exceptional biodiversity was protected by its isolation, but with the arrival of industrial logging all that changed. Only half of the island's ancient forests are left, and much of its unique wildlife is threatened, including the endangered Bornean orangutan, proboscis monkey, Bornean sun bear, and Bornean pygmy elephant.

In many ways, Hawaii is an island paradise, but it is also the most remote island chain on earth. Each island was formed by deep, explosive eruptions on the sea floor, with cooling lava emerging to create vast mountains in the warm Pacific Ocean.

The islands were so isolated that colonizing species rarely arrived over many hundreds of thousands of years, and those evolved slowly. However, the influx of people in ancient canoe rafts about AD 500 radically changed Hawaii. Now, many non-native plant and animal species have invaded. By the end of this century, many of these islands are predicted to disappear, but just as some are being reclaimed by the sea, others are rising up, forming new "islands of wonder."

Premieres Wednesday, September 16, at 7 p.m.



THE SECRET MIND OF SLIME

It is a giant single cell — with no brain — yet it can sense, reproduce, create efficient networks, and navigate a maze. Far from being dangerous, it has far-reaching scientific promise.

NOVA's The Secret Mind of Slime blends cutting-edge science, animation, the beauty of nature, and humor as it investigates one particular species, the electric yellow *Physarum polycephalum*, commonly known as a slime mold.

When fueled by oatmeal, slime mold finds the shortest route to the food source. It can even structure connections to different nutrient sources to optimize its diet.

What can this mean for humankind? Although slime molds have been around for a billion years, they are leading a revolution in cognitive science that could challenge our worldview of living matter and uncover the secrets of brainless intelligence.

Airs Wednesday, September 16.

klnrn 

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Questions?

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Words from the President...

Dear Friends,

As we approach the end of our fiscal year, I want to take a moment to thank YOU for ensuring that our community could depend on KLRN for insightful, informative, and inspirational content over the past months. Your generosity allowed us to adapt to meet the needs of our community during this unprecedented time, and for that we are deeply grateful.

We have an array of wonderful programs in store for you in the coming months, including several celebrating Hispanic

Heritage Month. We hope you'll join us as we uncover the struggles of undocumented construction workers in Texas in *Building the American Dream* and pay tribute to some of the most incredible artists of our time on the *Hispanic Heritage Awards*.

Keep watching,



Arthur R. Emerson
President and CEO

NATURE'S FEAR FACTOR

Gorongosa National Park is in the heart of central Mozambique, southeastern Africa. Encompassing 1,500 square miles, the park contains a variety of distinct ecosystems including grasslands with acacia trees and a spectacular rain forest at the base of a series of limestone gorges. At one time, the combination of unique features supported some of the densest wildlife populations in all of Africa.

Presented by *NOVA*, *Nature's Fear Factor* focuses on the situation created by a war that wiped out the top predators, upending the normal balance of competition. The remaining animals didn't simply grow in numbers — they began behaving in

unusual ways, veering outside their typical territories and altering their feeding patterns.

NOVA and a team of scientists asked the questions, "Can bringing predators back into the ecosystem help restore its natural balance? Can it be that it's not just predators' kills that keep other populations in check, but also the fear they inspire?" Now reintroducing wild dogs to Gorongosa will determine whether restoring the park's "landscape of fear" can restore balance to an entire ecosystem.

Airs Wednesday, October 14.





When Elinor encounters something she doesn't understand, she just can't let it go until she figures it out. Elinor is the most observant rabbit in Animal Town and the star of the new PBS KIDS show *Elinor Wonders Why*.

Along with her friends Ari, an imaginative bat, and Olive, a perceptive elephant, Elinor explores Animal Town, making observations and experiencing the amazing ways that nature is integral to our everyday lives.

Designed for kids ages 3–5, the show introduces them to science, nature, and community. Children will begin to understand the importance of diversity, caring for the environment, and working together to solve problems.

Co-creators Jorge Cham and Daniel Whiteson explain, "We want to encourage children's curiosity and share with them the fun of discovery. We hope to show children that science is not just a list of facts, but a way of answering questions and learning about the world." *Elinor Wonders Why* paves the way for children and their parents and grandparents to enjoy scientific inquiry together.

Airs weekdays at 9:30 a.m. beginning September 7.



TOUCHING THE ASTEROID

Touching the Asteroid, presented by NOVA, is chronicling the fascinating mission of the OSIRIS-REx spacecraft, which is traveling to Bennu. If the spacecraft can grab a piece of the asteroid and bring it back to Earth, scientists will gain great insights into our planet's origins — and even learn to defend against rogue asteroids that may one day threaten our planet. But NASA only gets three shots at collecting a sample.

OSIRIS-REx launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida, in September 2016, and in August 2018 the spacecraft began its approach to Bennu. A detailed survey identified primary and backup sites.

This fall, OSIRIS-REx will extend its specialized arm and make contact with the asteroid's surface for about five seconds. During this time, a burst of nitrogen gas will be released, causing rocks and surface material to be stirred up and captured in the sampler head. There is only enough nitrogen for three attempts!

Will the expedition be successful? That is the billion-dollar question. **Tune in when *Touching the Asteroid* premieres Wednesday, October 21.**



finding your roots

with
HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.

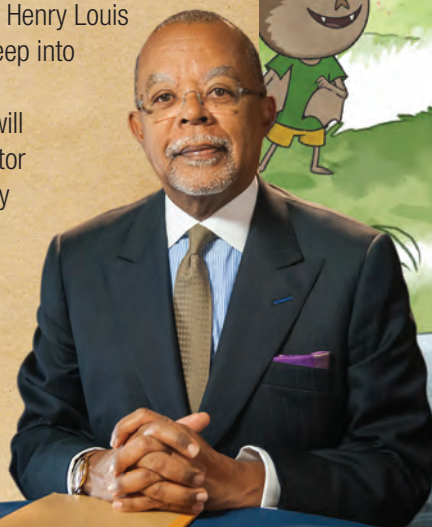


They come from a wide range of backgrounds; however, they have a common goal — to discover the surprising stories hidden within their own families. For more than a decade, *Finding Your Roots*, hosted by renowned Harvard scholar Henry Louis Gates, Jr., has revealed the ancestry of hundreds of people, taking us deep into the past to reveal the connections that bind us all.

In October, episodes entitled "Fashion's Roots" and "DNA Mysteries" will welcome the multi-talented RuPaul, designer Diane von Furstenberg, actor Téa Leoni, and others as they encounter ancestors they couldn't possibly have imagined they had and learn answers to questions that have confounded them since childhood.

Using extensive research, DNA, and scientific analysis, Gates and his team assemble Books of Life for each guest — records of all of their discoveries. The results often turn family narratives upside-down.

Join the conversation as ***Finding Your Roots* airs Tuesdays at 7 p.m. beginning October 13.** Will it inspire you to learn more about your own ancestry?





ONLINE

SEPT 14-21

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VIEWER COMMENTS

"The 4th of July celebration in San Antonio, TX, was awesome. My eldest grandson is in the Air Force and trained in Lackland. He is now stationed in NM. I sent him your website so that he could see it online." — *Eneida, KLRN Member*

"Thank you for so many gems. I'm an art historian and young, black, and Asian American. Your programs mean so much to me personally. I love to learn history, especially relating to my lineage, unlike in public schooling. And I find it so very important and vital that you guys do the work you do to make this information and content viewable to the public. Thank you! And I forgot to even mention PBS KIDS and how much my child LOVES *Sesame Street*! You are the best, PBS!" — *Kathleen, KLRN Member*

"I love PBS — especially Sunday night. You do a brilliant job offering so many choices. KLRN keeps me so informed, inspired, and enlightened ...plus entertained!" — *Anne, KLRN Viewer*

Mission Statement

KLRN's mission is to open a world of lifelong learning through trustworthy and enriching programs on-air, online, and in our community.

NOVA Premieres a Two-Part Series:

A to Z, The First Alphabet

How Writing Changed the World

Most of us learn to write in grade school, and once we know how to form letters, words, and sentences, we don't think too much about the process.

Presented by NOVA, the two-part series *A to Z, The First Alphabet* and *How Writing Changed the World* reveals how the written word shaped virtually all aspects of civilization from trading goods to expanding cultures throughout history.

Today, researchers are uncovering more about the beginnings and history of the alphabet. You'll discover how pictures and hieroglyphs that were first thought to be actual objects developed into abstract representations, and you'll follow the evolution of an alphabet from millennia-old carvings in an Egyptian turquoise mine to the sophisticated systems that developed.

What do hieroglyphs and Chinese characters have in common?... what do a catfish and a chisel have to do with the first Egyptian pharaoh?... where did the letter "A" come from? You'll learn all of this and much more when episodes one and two air on **Wednesdays, September 23 and 30.**