



Surprisingly Human

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**ANIMAL PLANET EXPLORES ONE OF THE SEVEN WONDERS
OF THE WORLD IN THE NEW SPECIAL *GREAT BARRIER REEF***

***-- Two-Hour Special on September 9 Journeys to the Depths of the Ocean to Examine
Exotic Wildlife and the Mysterious Coral Gardens --***

(Silver Spring, Maryland, August 22, 2012) – Earth’s largest living structure is also home to the most magical marine environment on the planet, and the Great Barrier Reef, a series of interconnected habitats harboring Earth’s most exotic creatures, spans more than 1,200 miles and is so large it can be seen from space. On **Sunday, September 9, at 9 PM (ET/PT)**, Animal Planet presents a two-hour special **GREAT BARRIER REEF**, which takes viewers beneath the Coral Sea and provides an inside look at this ever-changing natural miracle that’s abundant with stunning, untouched islands, coral cays and spectacular marine life.

GREAT BARRIER REEF provides a fresh perspective of this unique and crowded underwater world that is as large as New Mexico and is made up of more than 3,000 distinctive reefs and home to 1,500 species of fish, marine mammals and amphibians. Among the most amazing of the reef’s wonders are its eccentric creatures, including sharks that can walk on land; bio-electric sensory sharks, which can sense the tiny electrical signals emitted by the smallest twitching muscle; deadly snails; fluorescent coral; lethal jellyfish; saltwater crocodiles or “salties”; dwarf minke whales; humpback whales; and the parrot fishes, which immerse themselves at night in a cocoon of mucous, secreted from an organ on their heads for protection from white-tip sharks.

Below the surface of the lagoon, **GREAT BARRIER REEF** explores the *SS Yongala*, the 100-year-old shipwreck that’s home to a wide array of life. Schools of fish live their whole lives around the coral-encrusted structure, along with sea snakes, sting rays, sharks and the giant Queensland grouper, a fish that is capable of swallowing sting rays and sharks whole.

Resurfacing from below water, **GREAT BARRIER REEF** also explores the wild outer reefs of the Coral Sea, habitats of mangroves and rugged rainforest on the shoreline. The compilation of environments links the **GREAT BARRIER REEF** to the rest of the planet, featuring creatures that travel for thousands of miles to visit the warm water in large numbers, such as tiger sharks, great whales and green sea turtles.

About two million tourists visit the Great Barrier Reef each year, but there are still mysteries within its waters that have yet to be explored. Through the use of remote cameras, cutting-edge underwater macro- and digital time-lapse photography, **GREAT BARRIER REEF** captures sequences that have never been filmed before and provides viewers with unmatched access to this natural marvel.

GREAT BARRIER REEF is a BBC/Animal Planet co-production. Krishna San Nicolas is the coordinating producer for Animal Planet. Neil Nightingale is the executive producer and James Brickell is the series producer for BBC.

Animal Planet Media (APM), a multi-media business unit of Discovery Communications, is the world's only entertainment brand that immerses viewers in the full range of life in the animal kingdom with rich, deep content via multiple platforms and offers animal lovers and pet owners access to a centralized online, television and mobile community for immersive, engaging, high-quality entertainment, information and enrichment. APM consists of the Animal Planet television network, available in more than 96 million homes in the US; online assets www.animalplanet.com, the ultimate online destination for all things animal; the 24/7 broadband channel, Animal Planet Beyond; Petfinder.com, the #1 pet-related Web property globally that facilitates pet adoption; and other media platforms including a robust Video-on-Demand (VOD) service; mobile content; and merchandising extensions.

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