



Surprisingly Human

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Contact: Tahli Kouperstein, 240-662-2221 – office
240-401-9674 - cell
tahli_kouperstein@discovery.com

**EXPLORER LEVISON WOOD MAKES HISTORY AS FIRST PERSON TO WALK LENGTH
OF WORLD'S LONGEST RIVER IN ANIMAL PLANET'S
*WALKING THE NILE***

***-- Three-Hour Event Follows Levison's 4,250-Mile Trek Across a Paradoxically Perilous
And Peace-Loving Region, Premiering Wednesday, March 18, from 8-11 PM ET/PT --***

"I don't know from exactly where the idea to walk the entire length of the Nile originated. I know I wanted to follow in a great tradition, to achieve something unusual and inspire in others the thirst to do the same." -- Levison Wood

(Silver Spring, Md.) – It's known as a holy grail in exploration because its sheer length alone contributes to its timeless mystery. The Nile, the planet's longest river, is a life source to six African countries (Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, South Sudan, Republic of Sudan and Egypt) – some of whose names currently are synonymous with danger and conflict. The Nile also is known as the cradle of civilization; the first cities known to man were developed on its storied shores. It snakes its way through a region that's full of duality: it's both peaceful and dangerous; it is both a source of life and cause of death; it's remote and urban; and it's the epicenter for a diverse mix of religions and cultures, both modern and primitive.

Now, dauntless explorer and former British Army paratrooper Levison Wood is **WALKING THE NILE** – from source to sea – to uncover its many perplexities and to be the first person ever to endure something of extraordinary magnitude. **WALKING THE NILE** premieres on Animal Planet **Wednesday, March 18, from 8-11 PM ET/PT.**

Africa has always been one of Levison's greatest passions, and the Nile largely has been impassable until now because of disease, war and geo-political instability in the region. In **WALKING THE NILE**, Levison commits to his greatest expedition ever: 4,250 miles of walking along the river and through some of the most intense yet exquisite countries... a journey of more than seven million steps over a nine-month expanse.

On his journey, Levison suffers many emotional crises, including the shocking passing of a friend and journalist Matt Power (from heat stroke), who joined him along the way. By dodging minefields and heading into a 120-degree desert, he also must save himself amidst a violent civil war in South Sudan. Furthermore, he is robbed roadside, averts gangs and rebels and often is tailed by local law enforcement.

Day one begins in the Republic of Rwanda. This country is landlocked in Central Africa and is called 'The Land of a Thousand Hills.' It's also the location of the Nile's source, which paradoxically is just a small trickle of a stream. From Rwanda, Levison prepares to traverse north through Tanzania, Uganda, South Sudan, Republic of Sudan and finally Egypt, where the Nile spills into the

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Mediterranean Sea. Sometimes he has a small crew traveling with him; other times he has only a guide and a camera.

The Nile winds through one of the most dangerous regions of the world, and for significant reasons, it has deterred many from achieving what Levison attempts including civil upheaval, insufferable climate, unforgiving terrain and the threat of predatory wildlife. Every day of the journey, Levison faces physical and mental struggles, which could ultimately derail him in achieving his goal. Perhaps for him, the tallest hurdle is confronting his psychological resolve -- resetting his intention to carry on despite all the predictable and unpredictable challenges that lay ahead.

Fortunately, disaster gives way to unique, wondrous moments. Levison crosses through a world of incomparable beauty – seemingly as infinite as the Nile itself. He encounters vibrant landscapes and people and animals even more distinct and colorful than the places they inhabit. During these chapters of his journey, Levison is inspired by the humanity and history that's unique to Africa.

- Levison receives a blessing that involves bathing in goat's milk from a witch doctor in Uganda.
- He spends two days among the enigmatic and almost magical Mundari Tribe along South Sudan's Channel Islands, where he learns to give cows dung massages and shampoos his hair with cow urine.
- In the Republic of Sudan, Levison is treated to unparalleled hospitality when Nubians, known as 'the truest people of the Nile,' offer him and his guide the use of their beds and their very best food and drink. Some even offered to give Levison land, buy him a house and find him a wife!
- He negotiates for camels – known as "ships of the desert" – to take him, for safety reasons, on a detour across the Bayuda Desert, the most south-east corner of the massive Sahara; there, he rocks out to Gnarl Barkley with a Bedouin companion.
- Levison explores abandoned Sudanese pyramids (there are actually more pyramids in Sudan than in Egypt) before he takes his final walk toward 'the finish' in Egypt, cheered on by a steady crowd of journalists, guards and even the governor.

WALKING THE NILE is a three-hour special on Animal Planet and a four-part television series on Channel 4. The project is produced by October Films for Animal Planet and by October Films and GroupM Entertainment for Channel 4. The executive producers are Adam Bullmore and Jos Cushing for October Films; Melanie Darlaston and Tony Moulds for GroupM Entertainment; and Keith Hoffman for Animal Planet. It was developed for Animal Planet by Andy Berg and Kurt Tondorf and for Channel 4 by commissioning editor John Hay and commissioning editor multiplatform Mark Atkin.

Animal Planet, 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. Animal Planet consists of the Animal Planet television network, available in more than 94 million homes in the US; online assets www.animalplanet.com, the ultimate online destination for all things animal; Animal Planet L!VE, the go-to digital destination for round-the-clock, unfiltered access to the animal kingdom; and other media platforms including a robust Video-on-Demand (VOD) service, and merchandising extensions.