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**ANIMAL PLANET'S *HILLBILLY HANDFISHIN'* CATCHES BEST-EVER SERIES DEBUT
WITH ITS BARE HANDS**

-- Series Premiere Scores Record with 1.5M P2+ Viewers --

(Silver Spring, MD, August 9, 2011) – On Sunday, Animal Planet dove head first into murky Oklahoma waters and fished out record ratings with the premiere of **HILLBILLY HANDFISHIN'**, which scored the most-watched series debut ever for the network, delivering 1.5M P2+ viewers.

Building on the freshwater success of RIVER MONSTERS, the **HILLBILLY HANDFISHIN'** season opener – **“Catfish Are Wicked Cute”** – also reeled in strong audience numbers among all other key demos, including P18-49 (737K), P25-54 (697K), M25-54 (419K) and W25-54 (278K).

The premiere scored a 1.0 HH rating and a 0.8 M25-54 rating, which helped Animal Planet rank among the top five ad-supported cable networks in the 10 PM hour, tied with USA and Bravo (excluding sports).

“HILLBILLY HANDFISHIN' aims to deliver big adventure and strong characters while introducing the entire country to the wild world of noodling,” says Marjorie Kaplan, president and general manager of Animal Planet. “As Skipper Bivins says best, we triple-dog dare everyone to tune in!”

HILLBILLY HANDFISHIN' is a 12-part series, where thrill-thirsty city slickers head to rural Oklahoma to submerge themselves in murky waters and catch catfish with their bare hands and feet. Led by experienced Oklahoma hand fishermen and self-proclaimed hillbillies Skipper Bivins and Trent Jackson, city folk get a taste of the good-ole' country lifestyle by going through the paces of noodling catfish without tackle or bait. The only lures are fingers and toes – which can be just as attractive to the snakes, beavers, muskrats and snapping turtles that take over abandoned catfish holes as homes of their own. The experience might be uncomfortable, completely foreign and downright terrifying, but it promises to alter the lives and positively affect each newly crowned noodler.

HILLBILLY HANDFISHIN' is produced by Half Yard Productions for Animal Planet. Sean Gallagher and Abby Greensfelder are executive producers for Half Yard Productions. Keith Hoffman is executive producer for Animal Planet.

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 97 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.