

Wildlife

December 2009 £3.45 US \$7.25 CAN \$10.95
Volume 27 Number 13

bbcwildlifemagazine.com



Polar bears

The greatest images ever taken





MISSING LYNX
We search for the Spanish 'tiger' – the world's rarest cat



ROBIN REVELATION
Ten things you never knew about this much-loved bird



GORILLA QUEST
Join a daring mission to see how Africa's gorillas are faring

BBC Wildlife



On the cover
COVER Daniel J Cox/NaturalExposures.com
INSETS J B Ruiz/NPL; D Bivan; C Courteau/NPL

POLAR BEARS 26
We left no stone unturned to find the most beautiful images ever taken of this great bear.

GORILLA QUEST 50
Ian Redmond travels across Africa to find out how these endangered apes are faring.

ROBIN REVELATION 61
Andrew Lack reveals 10 things you never knew about our Christmas card pin-up.

ORCA VS GREAT WHITE ... 68
Has the most feared shark in the ocean finally met its match? By Jonnie Hughes

MISSING LYNX 96
James Fair goes to Spain in search of an extremely rare – and elusive – wild cat.

26
POLAR BEARS
Some of the world's top photographers share their greatest images of this iconic species.



61
ROBIN REVELATION
Andrew Lack reveals 10 little-known facts about everyone's favourite bird.



68
ORCA VS GREAT WHITE
"For some orcas, even 'Jaws' is on the menu."
Jonnie Hughes

Contents December 2009

Regular sections

HIGHLIGHTS	6	Q&A	81
Brett Westwood celebrates the month's wildlife, Dominic Couzens completes his mammal challenge and Gordon Buchanan explains how to spot deer.		Your wildlife questions answered by our experts.	
GO WILD	19	ON TEST	94
Follow our experts to this month's best wild places.		Quiet at the back, please! Our team of nature-loving youngsters test bug-hunting kits.	
RICHARD MABEY	24	YOUR LETTERS	113
Is there more to the will-o'-the-wisp than fable?		Share your opinions on any issues raised.	
SUBSCRIBE TO BBC WILDLIFE	40	YOUR PHOTOS	118
Subscribe today and receive a fabulous free book – <i>Wildlife Photographer of the Year: Portfolio 18</i> .		The editor chooses some of your best pictures.	
NEWS OF THE EARTH	43	TALES FROM THE BUSH	122
Breaking wildlife and environmental stories from around the globe.		Ever heard of pigeon-eating catfish? Andy Allen has.	
DISCOVERIES	48		
Fresh revelations from the natural world.			
GET ALL ARTY	48		
The <i>BBC Wildlife Artist of the Year</i> award is back!			
CHRISTMAS QUIZ: WHERE'S THE WILDLIFE?	48		
Penetrate the disguises of the world's finest mimics.			

w2

87 BOOKS
Our experts review the top nature reads for Christmas.

92 TV CHOICE
The month's best natural history tv, radio and DVDs.

101 TRAVEL EUROPE
Mark Rowe explores Thy, Denmark's first ever national park, home to golden eagles, cranes and red deer.

PORTFOLIO: POLAR BEARS

Some of *BBC Wildlife's* photographers pay tribute to the world's greatest bear, which has become an icon of its vanishing ice realm.

A WORD IN your ear? This seemingly tender photo taken by Daniel J Cox actually captures a moment of controlled aggression. No one is quite sure why the male polar bears of the western Hudson Bay, Canada, spend so much time striking poses and wrestling with each other. But they do, and some years it seems to take up an inordinate amount of their time. Most often, the two cavorting animals are similarly sized. There's speculation that this form of interaction is one way in which dominant male bears figure out who's the biggest and strongest without hurting each other. From a non-scientific perspective, it looks like they're just having a good time.

