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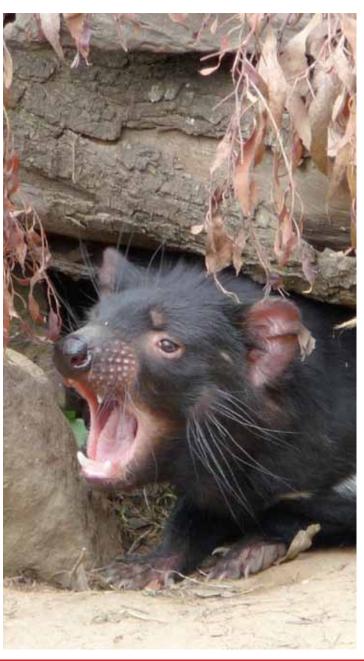
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Dur: 6 x 22.20mins Language: English

Episode 1 ISAN 0000-0003-8BF1-0001-Z-0000-0001-4 Episode 2 ISAN 0000-0003-8BF1-0002-X-0000-0001-A Episode 3 ISAN 0000-0003-8BF1-0003-V-0000-0001-G Episode 4 ISAN 0000-0003-8BF1-0004-T-0000-0001-M Episode 5 ISAN 0000-0003-8BF1-0005-R-0000-0001-S Episode 6 ISAN 0000-0003-8BF1-0006-P-0000-0001-Y

# **INTERNATIONAL SALES**

360 Degree Films PO Box 418 Brunswick 3056 Victoria, Australia Tel: + 61 3 8669 0540 info@360degreefilms.com.au























From the safety of captivity to the remote Tasmanian wilderness, 15 Tasmanian devils set off on an extraordinary adventure to save their species from extinction and change the course of Australian wild-life history.

# ONE PAGE

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A loveable marsupial with serious attitude, the Tasmanian devil is fighting for its survival. A devastating cancer epidemic threatens to wipe out the species with 80 per cent of the wild population killed by a highly contagious facial cancer, which first appeared in 1996.

The very real prospect of losing the species to Devil Facial Tumour Disease has mobilised the world's scientific community.

At the Save The Tasmanian Devil Program headquarters in Hobart, wildlife vet Sarah Peck, Phil Wise and their team have hatched an audacious plan to create an "insurance" population of disease-free devils. Elsewhere, a crack team of scientists and zoologists are testing Tasmanian devils to see if they have what it takes to survive in the wild.

Hope rests on a handful of devils born in captivity. Their mission: leave their safe surroundings to train in an elite squad before moving to an isolated island off the coast of Tasmania and a new life in the wild. Filmed by renowned wildlife cinematographer David Parer and directed by Andrew Sully, *Aussie Animal Island* follows 15 Tasmanian devils handpicked from Australian wildlife sanctuaries and prepared for release on remote Maria Island.

It's a risky experiment. The disease-free devils are captive and hand-reared. They've never hunted, found shelter or fought off another predator. If they can fend for themselves, they might save their species. But how will the island's native wildlife cope with their aggressive new neighbours? Endangered populations of wombats, little penguins, kangaroos and geese must adapt to these aggressive new arrivals or their future, too, is at risk.

Using the latest technology, this ground-breaking six-part documentary series follows 15 little devils as they are tested, selected, transported and released to rediscover their instincts to hunt, mate and – hopefully – raise their own.

They will fight for their survival and the survival of their species in this make-or-break year for the mammals, marsupials and birds on *Aussie Animal Island*.



# **EPISODE 1: MISSION MARIA ISLAND**

#### **ONE LINE**

Three Tasmanian devil joeys, Reba, Remmy and Ruben, prepare to leave life in captivity for an adventure into the wild that may hold the key to the survival of their species.

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The first episode of *Aussie Animal Island* follows a handful of devils, the carers who raise them and the scientists who are fighting to save them from extinction.

Orphaned when their mother died of Devil Facial Tumour Disease, a devastating cancer epidemic that is sweeping Tasmania, Reba, Remmy and Ruben have never lived in the wild. Raised by wildlife carer Lorraine Deweys, their home is a breadbox, lunch comes in a bottle and they seek their comfort from a large stuffed toy.

But while they are small and fluffy now, scientists hope the trio and many others like them will grow to become the predators they were born to be.

In an ambitious plan to save the species, a rescue squad of scientists plans to take 15 healthy devils to the protected habitat of Maria Island, off the east coast of Tasmania, to start a new, disease-free dynasty.

At 12 miles long and 8 miles wide, the island's Jurassic landscape of rugged mountains, lush bush and open plains are the perfect habitat for a new devil colony.

For decades it's been a place of refuge for iconic Australian animals such as the Forester kangaroo, Little Penguins, Wedge-Tailed eagles and the Flinders Island wombat.

But the locals are about to meet a lively bunch of carnivores with a formidable reputation.



# **EPISODE 2: DEVIL 'D' DAY**

#### **ONE LINE**

Scientists put the Tasmanian devils through personality tests to make sure they can cope with the adventure that awaits them – and freedom for the first time – on remote Maria Island.

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The second episode of *Aussie Animal Island* follows the devils to an isolation centre in Hobart where scientists from the Save the Tasmanian Devil team assess their behaviour.

To survive in the wild, the devils must shy away from human contact but remain curious about their surrounds.

First up is Reba. To earn her spot in the Maria Island squad she must avoid the food hidden under a beach ball, a test designed to determine whether she'll avoid human temptations on the island. Reba passes the test but, to prevent inbreeding, brother Ruben misses out. The devils are released into a large enclosure where a hierarchy emerges as big Jimmy hogs the food and hapless Manny goes without.

Once training is complete, the scientists put the devils through final health checks and fit five lucky recipients with GPS collars so they can track their every move. Then comes the moment they have waited for – the culmination of three years of planning and hard work – as the scientists load the boat and set off for Maria Island to release the devils into the wild.

For Reba – who spent most of her young life snoozing in a laundry basket – and many others like her, life will never be the same.









## **EPISODE 3: MEET THE NEIGHBOURS**

#### **ONE LINE**

As the newly released Tasmanian devils explore their new home on Maria Island, the hand-reared predators find the going tough and must dig deep to find the wild animal within.

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The third episode of *Aussie Animal Island* follows 15 Tasmanian devils released into the wild in a disease-free environment in a desperate attempt to save the species from extinction.

The devils explore their new home, finding plenty of strange sights and smells in the forests, beaches, open fields and dense scrub.

Once home to a penal colony of prisoners, Maria Island is now a national park and tourists flock from around the world to enjoy the native geese, kangaroos and wombats that abound. But how will the committed herbivores cope with 15 hungry, carnivorous hunters?

The devils are curious, cautious and hungry. While one lands a free meal under the nest of a Wedge-Tailed eagle, others live up to their scavenging reputations by tucking into long dead wildlife.

When Manny does the unthinkable and crashes a tourist barbeque, it nearly costs his place in the colony.

The next morning, remote cameras reveal how the devils spent their first night in the wild. And Manny is in trouble again when he's spotted by tourists behaving more like a labrador than a devil, posing for photos and sunbaking too close to a campsite.











# **EPISODE 4: SUMMER ON AUSSIE ANIMAL ISLAND**

#### **ONE LINE**

The Tasmanian devils face the challenge of their lives with an influx of tourists and a record-breaking heat wave that could spell the end for these tough little predators.

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The fourth episode of **Aussie Animal Island** follows the devils through a scorching summer and some of the hottest days on record.

With the icy Antarctic winds long gone, the devils are struggling to cope in their new environment. Wild devils are nocturnal but this hand-reared squad has a lot to learn. Instead of cooling in a burrow, the devils are lying around in the hot sun.

The only animals coping with the heat are the island's Little Penguins, which feed out at sea. The scientists fear the devils might feast on these tiny creatures and use radio collars and remote cameras to make sure the devils stay clear of the colony.

As the hunt for food continues, Reba, who's never killed anything in her life, is dropping weight. She's not the only one. Maria Island's grazing wildlife, the Forester kangaroos and the Cape Barron geese, are struggling to find food and the geese return to the mainland in search of greener pastures.

While the locals leave, the tourists arrive in boatloads. The scientists are concerned.

But as streams dry up, the Tasmanian devils must roam further in search of fresh water and the forest is littered with dead. This gives the devils a chance to scavenge, and as they munch through carcasses the blood-curdling screams of their fighting fills the night air.



# **EPISODE 5: MANNY GOES MISSING**

#### **ONE LINE**

Four months after releasing 15 Tasmanian devils on remote Maria Island, the scientists receive disturbing news, but hope arrives as the females prepare to mate for the first time.

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Four months after releasing 15 Tasmanian devils on remote Maria Island, the scientists receive disturbing news, but hope arrives as the females prepare to mate for the first time.

In the fifth episode of *Aussie Animal Island*, Reba, one of the eight female devils, has finally got the hang of finding food. Now she must find a mate to breed a new generation of disease-free devils.

As breeding season draws near, the scientists set traps around the island to capture and examine each of the devils to ensure they are healthy and ready to mate.

But it's not just the devils who are getting ready to breed as the male wombats and Forester kangaroos put on rare displays of masculine aggression to conquer their competitors and court their mates.

Even during mating season, the devils must eat and one clever one is drawn by the smell of an elephant seal carcass rotting on the beach. At least this devil is displaying natural behaviour – unlike Manny.

Inquisitive, confident and bit of a show-off, Manny is a favourite with the scientific team but has always had a nose for trouble. He hasn't been seen for a few days. Using the tracking device on his collar, the team sets out to solve the mystery, with heartbreaking results.











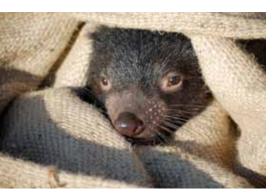
#### **ONE LINE**

The future looks bright for the Tasmanian devils as all eight females prepare to have joeys – the result the scientific team had hoped for.

#### **ONE PAGE**

in her pouch.

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In a resounding success for this groundbreaking scientific project, the final episode of **Aussie Animal Island** follows the little devils as they prepare for their first breeding season.

By mid autumn on Maria Island, many of the kangaroos have already given birth when the scientists return to check on the devils.



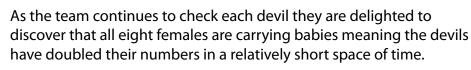
They discover that big Jimmy's been a busy lad – so busy that he's forgotten to eat and has lost almost a third of his weight. Next up is Reba and Lorraine Deweys, the wildlife carer who raised her as a baby, arrives on the island to hear the good news: Reba has two tiny babies

It's a milestone moment. Reba's offspring will be the first Tasmanian

devils born in the wild off mainland Tasmania.



After finding Reba's den, the scientists set up a camera to study her maternal behaviour and are surprised to find she has received not one, but two male callers. Male Tasmanian devils don't usually mix with females carrying young and the film offers a unique insight into



how captive devils released in the wild may create new behaviours.



While a few miles away on mainland Tasmania, Devil Facial Tumour Disease continues to ravage the populations. Reba, Remmy and this pioneering squad give new hope the species can be saved.



Sally Ingleton is no stranger to working on the wild side. As a producer, director, CEO and founder of Australian company 360 Degree Films, she has created award-winning documentaries including *Possum Wars, Kangaroo Mob* and the warmly received *Penguin Island*.

This time around, Ingleton has paired with award-winning director Andrew Sully (*Anatomy of a Massacre, Feral Peril*) on a remarkable six-part documentary series.

**Aussie Animal Island** (ABC/ITV/FRANCE TV) is a ground-breaking series with the potential to alter the course of Australia's wildlife history.

The future of the Tasmanian devil is under serious threat as an incurable infectious cancer known as Devil Facial Tumour Disease sweeps through its wild population. Unless scientists can establish a generation of disease-free marsupials, there's a strong possibility the devil will face extinction.

"Andrew approached me a number of years ago about his idea to make a one-hour documentary about the Tasmanian devil," Ingleton says. "We knew the government planned to release 100 devils on Maria Island, but over time that figure dropped to 15. When we sent the project to the ABC, they really liked the idea of us following these animals and telling their story."

And what a story. The Save the Tasmanian Devil team, a group made up of scientists, veterinarians and environmentalists, knows that the disease only occurs in the wild when the marsupials fight and transfer the infection via bites. Devils bred in captivity are not at risk.

With the support of the Tasmanian Government, the team sent 15 carefully selected devils to Maria Island to begin a new life as an "insurance" population of devils in the wild. A short ferry ride from Hobart, Maria Island National Park is a popular tourist destination and home to other endangered wildlife looking for a second chance, including Cape Barron geese, Forester kangaroos and the Flinders Island wombat.

"The island is a bit of a Noah's Ark," Ingleton says. "Once we released the devils we monitored each one and found out who was coping with living in the wild for the first time, and who was not."

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Almost immediately, personalities emerged. "Each devil has its own characteristics; Manny's a real explorer, Reba's quite shy, and Big Jimmy's definitely an alpha male."

For director Andrew Sully, the thought of the Tasmanian devil facing extinction was incentive enough to get involved. "I became interested in their plight when I was working on *Feral Peril*, but since then, there's been a rapid decline in the number of devils," he says.

Before filming began, Ingleton and Sully had to work out what sort of documentary they wanted to make. "We knew there was a story to be told, and as soon as we heard about the project to release the devils onto Maria Island, a place that in someway mirrors Australian history, things started to make more sense."

Once a penal colony filled with prisoners sent from England, Maria Island now attracts hundreds of tourists all eager to see wildlife in its native environment. It's an ideal location for the devils with weather and terrain – mountains, forests and open plains – virtually identical to mainland Tasmania.

"People don't know a lot about the devil," Ingleton says. "They're not quite as endearing as koalas and, because of their name, there's this perception that devils are fearsome, screeching creatures, like the Warner Bros. cartoon. In fact, they're quite gentle, especially with their joeys."

While filming devil joeys wrapped in a carer's blanket wasn't exactly a challenge, capturing the mature devils on Maria Island was an altogether different experience.

"We spent a lot of time making sure we had the right equipment, techniques and technology," Sully says. "Devils are largely nocturnal, shy and secretive animals, so filming them in the wild is incredibly hard. We used infrared cameras and small cameras that could follow wombats down burrows."

Each episode focuses on a part of the devil's adjustment to life in the wild, so Sully and his crew had to ensure they captured an entire lifecycle. "In the natural world, things happen at specific times, so we had to make sure we caught these moments on camera. If you miss it, that's it."

These included remarkable moments, such as a startled devil encountering a kangaroo for the first time. The pair exchanges a look of astonishment before hastily parting ways.

Helping Sully capture those critical moments was the award-winning natural history filmmaker David Parer. "He was a great," Sully says. "We'd get to a location and David just instinctively knew where the best place was to set up the camera."



Editor Tony Stevens agrees: "We relied on David to get those great moments on film; the close ups, the wide shots that capture the essence of the story."

Both Sully and Stevens were surprised by the devils distinctive personalities.

"I had no idea how inquisitive they are, especially Manny. He was a real character, lying around sunbaking, crashing a barbecue. In the end he was virtually posing for photographs!" says Stevens.

Ingleton was struck by their emotional range: "I'd spoken with lots of people who had worked closely with them, and they all said the same thing: they can be aggressive, caring, violent, inquisitive, lazy, smart. Over time, I found myself getting caught up in their lives and by the end of the year, I felt a great attachment to them."

But that attachment could never tip into sentimentality. Sully and his crew were there to document every aspect of the devils' release into the wild – good times and bad.

"Releasing a predator into an environment such as Maria Island brings up enormous issues, and there were real concerns about whether the devils would maintain the balance," he says. Or put new neighbours, such as the colony of little penguins, in danger.

Fortunately the project has been a great succuss and, over time, the other wildlife have adapted. If anything, the release has had a positive impact on the entire island, with devils helping to keep populations stable. "Devils are basically the clean up crew of the bush," Sully says. "They eat carcasses, but rarely attack healthy animals. They play a crucial role in making sure nature maintains a balance."

As filming came to end, Ingleton, Sully and Stevens had their own quest to find balance. Aussie Animal Island is a compelling documentary with both light and dark moments. Finding a narrator to convey the drama and humour was never going to be easy.

Eventually Ingleton tracked down actor Jason Donovan. "Jason is on the road performing **Priscilla**, **Queen of the Desert**, but he was very enthusiastic from the beginning and he's found the time to take part," she says. "We think he's done a terrific job."

Ultimately everyone working on *Aussie Animal Island*, from the wildlife carers, the scientists, conservationists, veterinarians, and all the crew share the same aim.

As Sully puts it: "Aussie Animal Island is about highlighting just how important Tasmanian devils are to everyone and how crucial it is that we value and preserve them as a species."



Science publications/radio programs – the battle to save the Tasmanian devil from extinction

Environment publications/radio programs – as an above – Tasmania as one of the last great wilderness areas, the rare and endangered wildlife that abounds

Travel stories – Maria Island as a destination for wildlife spotting

Interview with director/cinematographer – how is it to film animals in the wild? Challenges?

Meet the carers – what does it take to become a carer? How hard is it to let go?



#### 360 Degree Films

http://360degreefilms.com.au/productions/devil-island/

#### **Save the Tasmanian Devil Program**

http://www.tassiedevil.com.au/tasdevil.nsf

#### **Maria Island**

http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/?base=3495

#### **Tourism Tasmania**

http://www.discovertasmania.com.au

#### **David Parer**

http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0661357/

#### **Tasmanian Devil Facts for Kids**

http://www.dpiw.tas.gov.au/inter/nsf/webpages/ekoe-6fa6qb?open

#### **Wildlife Information Services**

http://www.wildlifetasmania.com/images/newsletter04\_revised%20edition\_.pdf

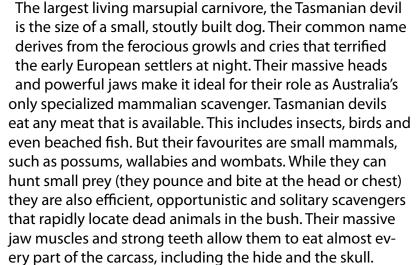
#### **Devil Facial Tumour Disease**

http://www.dpiw.tas.gov.au/inter.nsf/webpages/lbun-5qf86g





#### THE TASMANIAN DEVIL





In short, they are an efficient killing machine.



Like all marsupials, the Tasmanian devil has a softer side. They carry their young in a pouch through infancy. Up to four 'joeys' can stay in the backward-opening pouch for five months before emerging fully furred into their grass-lined den. A month later they will explore outside their den and by 10 months they are fully weaned and independent.

Although they once roamed across the Australian mainland, the devil now only lives in Tasmania. Following the extinction of the Tasmanian tiger, in 1936, the very real prospect of losing the Tasmanian devil has mobilized the world's scientific community. Geneticists in the USA, UK and Australia are working overtime to unlock the secrets of the devil disease and the devil genome in the hope that this will help save the species.



#### THE DEVIL DISEASE

Devil Facial Tumour Disease (DFTD) is extremely unusual as it is only one of three recorded cancers that is contagious. The disease is passed from devil to devil via biting and has spread across the state from East to West at a rate of 6km per year. Since the cancer was first discovered in the 1996, the population of Tasmanian devils has plummeted by 80%. If the current rate of contagion continues, the species may be extinct in the wild within 10 years.

#### THE CONSERVATION EFFORT

A range of strategies are being pursued to save the devil.

Scientists are attempting to identify and breed devils immune to the disease. Meanwhile nearly 200 devils live in zoos around mainland Australia, where they are effectively quarantined from the disease, as an 'insurance population'. But scientists believe that a captive population will never be sufficient to maintain genetic diversity in the species. In captivity, devils rapidly lose stomach bacterium that creates a natural immunity for wild devils. To protect the species there needs to be a sustainable disease-free wild population in Tasmania.



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#### SAVE THE TASMANIAN DEVIL PROGRAM

The Save the Tasmanian Devil Program is a government initiative that was established in 2003 in response to the threat of Devil Facial Tumour Disease to the endangered Tasmanian devil. Its mission is to combat the disease threat, to ensure the survival of the species and achieve its recovery in the wild as an ecologically functioning entity.

To guard against the species extinction, the Program has established a captive 'Insurance Population' of over 500 healthy devils, which represent the genetic diversity of the species, and to maintain the species in the wild the Program is establishing populations of healthy devils in defined landscapes of Tasmania, such as islands and peninsulas, protected against contact with diseased devils. Maria Island, off Tasmania's East Coast was selected for the first translocation of devils and a natural healthy breeding population has been established to strengthen the insurance population.

For more information go to, www.tassiedevil.com.au





#### JASON DONOVAN - Narrator

Jason Donovan came into our lives in the late 80's as Scott Robinson on the hit Australian series, *Neighbours*. Throughout 1988/89 he had several hits and his album *Ten Good Reasons* was the best-selling album of 1989.

Since that time, he has rarely been away from stage or screen including leading stage roles in *Joseph*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *Priscilla* and *The Sound of Music*. In the last two years, we have seen him make the *Strictly Come Dancing* final after which he completed the *Strictly Live* UK and Ireland Tour. He released an album, was interviewed by Piers Morgan for his ITV1 *Life Stories* series, and was a mentor/judge with former Spice Girl, Melanie Chisholm, Dawn French and Andrew Lloyd Webber for the ITV1 musical talent show *Superstar*.

He spent much of last year in Australia and the US, filming a TV reality show for Australia based on finding a new cast for *Priscilla* and spent some time as a DJ on Sydney and Melbournes Smooth Radio. In the winter, Jason returned to Jeff Waynes *War Of The Worlds The New Generation*, in the role of Parson Nathaniel. Throughout 2013 he has been on tour in the UK reviving his role as Tic in *Priscilla*.



#### **SALLY INGLETON – Producer**

Sally Ingleton is one of Australia's most successful producers of science and nature documentaries. Sally was the producer behind the hit BBC1 nature soap series *Penguin Island* which was a ratings success and was nominated for Best Wildlife Series at the ROSCAR Awards at WildTalk South Africa.

Apart from *Aussie Animal Island*, Sally's currently

producing the one hour science nature program *Acid Ocean* (PBS NOVA, ZDF, Arte France, SVT, SBS). In 2013 she also produced *Possum Wars* (ABCTV, SVT, ARTE), and the arts documentary *The Talented Mr Stone* for ABCTV.

In 2011 she completed *Kangaroo Mob* (ABC1, RTBF, YLE, SVT nominated Best Science and Nature Documentary ATOM) and *Australia's Great Flood* (National Geographic Channel USA which won the coveted ASTRA Award for Best Documentary in Australia Subscription TV in 2012).

Her film **Seed Hunter** (ABC/Arte France/SVT/RTE) took the tricky subject of saving crop seeds and turned it into an adventure thriller which captivated audiences worldwide and turned Dr Ken Street into a cult figure. It picked up a Gold Panda at the Sichuan TV Festival (Grand Prize Nature) and awards in Japan at both the Earth Vision and Japanese Wildlife Film Festivals 2009; Best Conservation and Environment South Africa WILD TALK 2009; Nominee Rockie Award Banff TV Festival 2009; ATOM Award Best Science and Environment Documentary; plus awards at festivals in Finland and China.

Other credits include the contemporary current affairs documentary *Tibet: Murder In the Snow* for SBS/BBC2/RTBF/TSR/YLE and arts documentary *Eye For Architecture* (SBS/AVRO) which won the National Institute of Australian Architects Award for Best Architecture in the Media; *Welcome 2 My Deaf World* (AFI Best Documentary nominee 2006) and *2 Mums and a Dad* (Best Documentary Dendy Award and ATOM Awards 2007).



Wildlife Film Festival in Montana, USA.

#### ANDREW SULLY - Director

Andrew Sully is an award-winning writer and director. In 2009 he completed the documentary *Anatomy Of A Massacre* for ABC TV about a forensic investigation in East Timor to find the missing protestors from the 1991 Santa Cruz Massacre. He also made *Feral Peril* for ABC TV, an ecological detective story about the threat of introduced feral carnivores in Tasmania. It won three awards at the 2009 International

In 2005, he directed the acclaimed four-part ABC TV series *The Shearers*. Andrew's earlier documentary work includes the Film Australia and ABC TV series *East Timor - Birth Of A Nation, Once Were Monks* (Film Australia/SBS TV) and the theatrically released *Hell Bento!!*, *Uncovering the Japanese Underground* (SBS TV). He was also a director on the documentary series *Suspicious Minds, Forensic Stories from the Coroner's Office* (Channel Nine), *Dave In the Life* (SBS TV) and *The Two Of Us* (SBS TV).

**Black Dogs**, his short drama, won numerous local and international awards including an ATOM award, Best Film at the St Kilda Film Festival and the Grand Prix at the Festival International des Ecoles de Cinéma, Poitiers. His next film, **A Dancing Foot and a Praying Knee**, was nominated for two AFI Awards and received a national theatrical release.



# rors Of Tasmania about Tasmanian devils.

## DAVID PARER ACS – Natural history cinematographer

David Parer is one of Australia's best known natural history cinematographers with credits that include *Wolves Of the Sea*, *Mysteries Of the Ocean Wanderers* and his 3 part series on the Galapagos including the much acclaimed *Two Years In Galapagos*. Recently he has worked on the 6 part series *Penguin Island* and *Australia - Land Of the Parrots*. In 2005 he produced and directed *Ter-*

David began his career as a physicist spending two years in the Antarctic studying cosmic rays. Soon the lure of the electron was replaced by a fascination for the photon and he took to making wildlife films for the newly formed ABC Natural History Unit. Trips to New Guinea, Macquarie Island and the Antarctic resulted in a dozen programs. He and wife Liz teamed up in the late 1970s, working together on many films for the ABC Natural History department including the *Nature Of Australia* series for Australia's bicentenary.



### **DALE CORNELIUS – Composer**

Dale Cornelius has written scores for a diverse range of films, recently including; *Mary and Max* - opening night film for Sundance Film Festival, *Cliffy* - the feature length biopic of ultra marathon runner, Cliff Young, *The Doctor Blake Mysteries* - 10 x 1hr murder mystery series on ABC1, *Penguin Island* - BBC1 and ABC1 documentary series, and *Dr Samasts Music School* - which won the 2013 AACTA award for best sound and music in a docu-

mentary. He is currently composing for the 3D Imax film, Hidden Universe.

