

## DVD press release



# Secrets of Nature

Pioneering natural history films, 1922 - 1933

**A captivating collection of 19 British films that used groundbreaking techniques to share the secrets of the natural world with cinema audiences.**

The natural world has always inspired fascination. In 1922, *Secrets of Nature*, a pioneering series exploring animal, plant and insect life, made wondrous worlds and natural processes visible for the first time: sweet peas unfurl in the sunlight, white owls swoop on their prey, sea life lurks on the ocean floor and moths patiently spin their cocoons.

These rarely-seen films – now brought to DVD for the first time – were made by enterprising men and women such as Percy Smith and Mary Field, at the forefront of science and nature filmmaking, who developed groundbreaking techniques of time-lapse, microscopic and underwater cinematography.

Paving the way for the natural history programmes that millions know and love today, these *Secrets*, with intriguing titles like *The Strangler*, *Magic Myxies* and *Floral Co-operative Societies*, offer an entertaining, absorbing, and very special glimpse into the mysteries of the natural world. *See page 2 for film titles.*

All the films included here are now preserved by the BFI National Archive which celebrates its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in July 2010: [www.bfi.org.uk/archive75](http://www.bfi.org.uk/archive75)

### Special features

- All films have been digitally re-mastered
- *Percy Smith with Herons* (1921), an extract from the *Urban Movie Chats* series: one of nature filmmaking's pioneers in the role of adoptive father
- 38-page illustrated booklet featuring newly commissioned essays by leading researchers and scholars including the Science Museum's Tim Boon, film notes, photographs and illustrations

### Interview opportunities

Consultant and Programmer Tim Boon, Chief Curator at the Science Museum and Jan Faull, Archive Producer and Programmer at the BFI National Archive are available for interview

### Release date: 19 July 2010

RRP: £19.99 / cat. no. BFIDVD861 / cert E

UK / 1922-1933 / black and white / mixed silent, and sound (English language) / 200 mins / DVD-9 / original aspect ratio 1.33:1 / Dolby Digital mono audio (320 kbps)

BFI DVDs are available from all good DVD retailers; by mail order from the BFI Filmstore

Tel: 020 7815 1350 or online at [www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore](http://www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore)

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Images are available at [www.image.net](http://www.image.net) (BFI DVD & Blu-ray 2010)

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## **Secrets of Nature film listing**

### **The techniques**

Fathoms Deep Beneath the Sea (1922)  
The Plants of the Pantry (1927)  
Magic Myxies (1931)  
The World in a Wine-glass (1931)  
Romance in a Pond (1932)  
Brewster's Magic (1933)

### **The birds**

The Cuckoo's Secret (1922)  
The White Owl (1922)  
The Bittern (1931)  
The Nightingale (1932)

### **The insects**

Skilled Insect Artisans (1922)  
The Battle of the Ants (1922)  
Busy Bees (1926)  
The Aphis (1930)

### **The plants**

Floral Co-operative Societies (1927)  
Peas and Cues (1930)  
Scarlet Runner & Co (1930)  
The Strangler (1930)  
Gathering Moss (1933)

### **About the BFI**

There's more to discover about film and television through the BFI. Our world-renowned archive, cinemas, festivals, films, publications and learning resources are here to inspire you. To find out more go to [www.bfi.org.uk](http://www.bfi.org.uk)

15 June 2010