

Wolves and hare

Food is so hard to find this far north that a wolf pack must search hundreds of square kilometres if it's to be successful... and success means raising the next generation.

To do that here, the wolves must work together. So, the young are raised not only by their parents... but by their aunts and uncles as well. Together, they try to ensure that each pup reaches near-adult size before the snow returns.

A growing pup needs more than just a few leverets. The wolves need bigger prey and, to catch that... they must hunt as a pack.

Adult hares may be easy to spot... but they are far from easy to catch. They run at 60 kilometres an hour.

To catch one, the wolves work as a team. One of them gets close enough to bite the hare's tail. But a hare can change direction in an instant.

If it can continue to sidestep and *jink*, it may ultimately outlast them.

Finally, it gets away.

For the next hare, the whole pack gives chase. Now, numbers count. The lead wolves keep up the pace. Others run on either side, so the hare can't change direction.

A tiny meal for a whole pack...

Tursiops and fish

Hunting is only possible for three hours around low tide, when the mud banks are exposed.

Razor-sharp oysters cover much of the shore. Beaching here could be lethal. The hunters need to find a stretch of shoreline with just the right slope.

Too level and the dolphins risk stranding. Too steep and they can't force their prey from the water.

Working as a team, the dolphins surround the fish, driving them towards the shore. Attacking in perfect synchrony, the dolphins create a bow wave. It carries their prey on to the muddy banks.

Other fish-eaters profit from their daring. Herons and gulls follow every hunt. To get to the fish first, the dolphins drive themselves high up the bank. But if they go too far, they risk stranding.

To prevent fish escaping between them, the dolphins all beach themselves on the same side. Always the right.

But this has a cost. Each time they grab a fish, they also take in a mouthful of mud. The grit gradually wears down their teeth. But on one side only. In time, these teeth get so worn down that older dolphins can no longer hunt like this and must find other ways to catch fish.

Octopus and land

Northern Australia has the highest tides in the tropics, which expose vast areas of shoreline.

And here lives a truly extraordinary species of octopus.

Octopuses are marine animals. They live and breathe underwater. At low tide, most octopuses would be imprisoned in their rocky pools. But this is no ordinary octopus.

It's the only one specially adapted to walk on land. It pulls itself along, using the hundreds of tiny suckers that line its arms. Hunting for crabs, it walks from pool to pool.

Apart from a rather startled fish... this one is empty. So, the octopus moves on. A rock pool may seem like a safe refuge. But the octopus's suckers enable it to move just as stealthily in water as out of it. Nowhere is safe when this octopus is around...

Army ants and jungle

The army ant. This may look like a ball of a million individuals, but *make no mistake...* the colony acts as one. A super-organism with a sensory system of two million antennae.

A skeleton made from the living bodies of workers. A defence system of soldier ants... ready to act at any sign of danger.

A digestive system processing piles of food deep inside. Even a coordinated system for dealing with all the waste. These are insects that, by working together, transcend individual size.

The colony can search the entire jungle... and flush out its wildlife. Each day, it *sends out* a silent probe into the forest in quest of food.

It doesn't use scouts like other ants. Instead, a vast search party pushes into *virgin territory*... seeking out the signs of anything alive. They spread out along a ten-metre front... sweeping across the forest floor.

To find prey, the ants must first touch it. The irony is that this, the most successful *hide-and-seek player* in the forest, is almost completely blind. It distinguishes the living only by their movement. As long as an animal remains still, it is safe. But the *slightest twitch* will *give it away*.

Within seconds, the prey is *pinned down*. Within minutes, it's torn apart at its joints.

The more the prey struggles, the more the ants engage. Right across the raid front,

prey of all sizes are driven from their hiding places. Even wasps must abandon their homes when the ants arrive. Everything alive *in the path of* the raiders is overwhelmed... by *sheer numbers*.