

NATURE



WALES

SPIRIT OF THE DRAGON



Written and directed by **Matt Hamilton**
Executive producers: **Martin Mészáros, Sabine Holzer**

1x50 min.
4K, 5.1 and Stereo



#terramatters

Wales is a land of jagged peaks, ancient forests and rugged shores. It may be small, but its wild wealth rivals anywhere on Earth. From spectacular gatherings to rare and curious creatures, life here thrives in the face of extreme and ever-changing conditions. Despite heavy snow, torrential rain and blistering heat, a charismatic cast of animals finds a way to survive. This endurance in the face of adversity is symbolised by the famous red dragon on the Welsh flag. With a cinematic Celtic score and spectacular imagery, our film reveals Wales in all its beautiful, wild glory.

It's winter. The Welsh mountains are blanketed white. Heavy snow is falling and an icy wind rips through the peaks. It is a truly hostile place, yet mysterious figures appear in the blizzard. Carneddau ponies. Genetically unique and numbering less than 300, they have survived here for thousands of years. They work hard to feed, raking away the snow to reach meagre pickings beneath.

Winter pushes the wildlife of Wales to its limits. Unpredictable weather, ruled by the vast Atlantic Ocean, batters the land with storm after storm. Cute, fluffy, newborn seal pups must avoid being swept out to sea as the waves grow ever more powerful.

As spring arrives, storms subside and the land transforms. Carpets of wild daffodils and bluebells fill the Welsh forests. A hazel dormouse wakes from her long winter sleep. The ancient forest where she lives is truly unique. It's known as the Celtic Rainforest. Over three metres of rain falls here through the year, creating a moss covered, mysterious realm. The streams here are also home to dippers, the only

songbird that feeds underwater. Rare footage reveals them flipping stones many times their weight to dine on aquatic insects beneath.

Summer brings good times and great spectacle to the Welsh coast. On one offshore island, some 35,000 puffins come and go, beaks full of sandeels to feed their chicks. Bizarre sea lamprey swim up the great Welsh rivers to spawn. And around an abandoned colliery, terrifying tiger beetle larvae sit in wait, snatching unsuspecting prey, dragging it below ground.

Autumn paints Wales red, orange and yellow. The fallow deer rut begins, with the males' violent battles raging long into the cold night. Rivers swell as torrential rains return. Salmon take this opportunity to fight their way upstream to their spawning grounds. The days grow ever shorter and colder as winter returns.

This immersive film offers an intimate portrait of life on the edge, where the vast Atlantic Ocean brings challenging and unpredictable conditions all through the year. In Wales, we discover a country steeped in myth and legend, home to enchanting creatures, where the spirit of the dragon endures.

A production of Terra Mater Studios
produced by Dandy Lion Films



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