



THE  
**DIRTY**  
DOZEN

Executive producers:  
**Sabine Holzer, Walter Köhler**  
12x30 min., 4K, 5.1 + Stereo





**We like to live in an ultra-clean world—we try to banish dirt from our lives ... but what about the expression 'as happy as a pig in muck'? In nature, dirt—soil, mud, dung and the like—provide a very good living, if you know how to live and love down in the dirt.**

## »MEET THE DIRTY DOZEN«.

In 12×30 minute programs we'll encounter twelve extraordinary creatures that thrive in – well, dirt. And we'll see that, contrary to popular opinion, dirt isn't just healthy but the creatures that live there are vital to the functioning of our world.

Pigs are the archetypal dirty animal, and 'filthy pig' is a well-known insult. But the wallows of sticky mud that wild pigs create work wonders for their skin – and are much cheaper than mud face packs at an expensive spa hotel. And many other creatures depend on these pig ponds, while the constant rootling of pig snouts through forest dirt rotavates the soil, creating a rich diversity of forest plants.

But the real dirt movers are earthworms. They eat dirt and aerate the soil. Without them, agriculture would collapse. So, let's get down and dirty with worms to see their lives first hand, and meet the world's largest worm – from Australia, the giant Gippsland earthworm, reaching 3 metres in length.

The thick mud of estuaries and swamps are such rich feeding grounds that around the world, many species of shorebirds follow the receding tide, probing the mud with bills of such exquisite sensitivity, it's hard for us to imagine. In the tropics, mangrove swamps, growing out of rich mud, are hotspots of such diversity that they rival rainforests. Here, mudskippers dig burrows with their own private swimming pools at the bottom and skip over the mud at low tide in extravagant leaping displays. In south-east Asia we'll meet crab-eating macaques, monkeys that are as 'happy as pigs in muck'.

The world is full of shit – yet more opportunities for another of our dirty dozen. Dung beetles swarm to fresh dung, rolling it away to bury. Without them, we'd be up to our knees in shit – as what happened in Australia. The local dung beetles couldn't cope with dung from vast herds of cows, so dung lay thick on the ground, breeding millions of flies and forcing Ozzies to hang wine corks from their hats, only solving the problem by introducing African dung beetles.

A production of



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