2013 Summer viewing— EcoSchools top picks!

DOCUMENTARIES AND FILMS

*Smarty Plants: Uncovering the Secret World of Plant Behaviour, The Nature of Things*
45 min: 11 sec.

Are there more to plants than meets the eye? Could there be plant “families” and “communities,” like human families and communities that communicate and nurture each other to ensure survival of the species? This beautifully filmed episode of David Suzuki’s *The Nature of Things* takes viewers on a journey through the mysterious world of plants and their behaviours. If you’ve only got a few minutes to view the episode, fast forward to the section with Dr. Suzanne Simard (36:00) and her work on *how trees communicate* (if you’ve seen the movie *Avatar*, you’ll find her work even more fascinating!)

*Planet Earth*, BBC

If you haven’t yet watched this series of films, this summer may be the perfect time. Few films have captured nature’s beauty as the BBC’s *Planet Earth* has done. Divided by topic into 11 films (exploring everything from the deep unknown places in the caverns and oceans of the world to the highest peaks of the Andes and Rocky mountains), this series is our EcoSchools staff’s perennial favourite!
**Home**
1 hr: 33 min

Another visually stunning film, *Home* goes beyond filming the rich beauty of the planet and asks the hard questions about the environmental and social costs of human activity on this planet. While most of the film presents realistic and stark reminder of nature’s fragility, woven throughout is the message of hope in its resilience and our ability to take action to make positive environmental changes. At the end the film’s narrator asks, “What are we waiting for?”

**Human Footprint, National Geographic**
1 hr: 32 min

Ever wonder just how much stuff we consume in our lifetime? This National Geographic documentary follows an average American boy and girl as they grow from infancy to adulthood. Starting with 3,796 disposable diapers (for just one child) and the associated crude oil, water, tree pulp, plastic; the food we will consume; the cars we drive and resources required to make the homes we live in. Everything is laid out on the front lawn (and street) of an average American home – and the end result is shocking!
YOUTUBE TEASERS AND LESSON STARTERS

**Mother Tree**  
4 min: 40 sec

Here’s a shorter version of Dr. Suzanne Simard’s work in BC’s Redwood forests to uncover the vast networks of roots and fungi that help trees communicate with each other. She draws upon the similarities between a forest system and the neural networks in the human brain.

**Breathe In Breathe Out**, Greenpeace  
1 min: 20 sec

A slow, human breath, in and out, is the only sound in this quick Greenpeace video that highlights the connection between our oceans and the air we breathe.

**Give Earth A Hand**, Greenpeace  
1 min: 30 sec

Human hands create and form elements of nature in this video that ends with the message, “Give Earth a hand”.

June 2013
This list wouldn’t be complete without another staff favourite. This WWF one minute video puts nature and humanity side by side and reminds us that we are indeed all connected.