

Science on the Air

Check your local listings for exact times and dates. (R) indicates a repeat broadcast.

Dec. 3 (PBS) Wild America – “Swamp Bear” Part I (R) Tracks the South's largest animal, the honey-loving black bear.

Dec. 4 (PBS) Life Matters – “Alzheimer's Disease” Features Alzheimer's researchers Robert Katzman and Robert Terry, who offer new hope to victims of this disease and their families.

Dec. 4 (PBS) Nature – “The Sunburnt Country” Reports on some of the animals that survive in Australia's arid interior.

Dec. 6 (PBS) Nova – “The All-American Bear” Clarifies the mysteries of the black bear, debunking myths and uncovering the complex and little-known chemistry of hibernation.

Dec. 8 (PBS) Science Journal Provides timely news on the week's events in science, medicine and technology. Thursdays.

Dec. 10 (PBS) Wild America – “Swamp Bear” Part II (R) Marty Stouffer encounters both friendly and deadly creatures before locating the bear's feeding ground.

Dec. 11 (PBS) Life Matters – “Obesity” Tells how an obese man lost 170 pounds, why it was necessary and how others can duplicate his life-saving feat.

Dec. 11 (PBS) Nature – “Land of Flood and Fire” Explores Australia's rugged northeast and the animals that struggle to survive in its varied climate.

Dec. 12 (PBS) The First Eden – “The Making of the Garden” (R) Follows the creation of the Mediterranean Sea and the evolution of the plants and animals that populate the area.

Dec. 13 (PBS) Nova – “Can We Make a Better Doctor?” Tracks eight students through the first year of Harvard Medical School in part one of this series based on a 10-year study showing the making of a doctor.

Dec. 14 (PBS) The Mind – “The Violent Mind” Explores the relationship between brain science and the law.

Dec. 17 (PBS) Wild America – “Beautiful Blues” (R) Looks at the color blue in both the plant and animal kingdoms and explains some of the reasons this color exists.

Dec. 18 (PBS) Your Water, Your Life Tells how people across the United States are responding to the widespread contamination of the nation's water supplies.

Dec. 18 (PBS) Life Matters – “Depression” Shows how this potentially crippling malady is treatable.

Dec. 18 (PBS) Nature – “The End of Isolation” Tells how ancient aborigines survived by using a deep understanding of Australia's native plants and animals, and how modern Australians are planning a future where people can live in harmony with the land once again.

Dec. 19 (PBS) The First Eden – “The Gods Enslaved” (R) Looks at humans' earliest relationship with nature through cave drawings discovered in southern Spain.

Dec. 19 (PBS) Discover – “The World of Science” Reveals the aerodynamics of boomerang throwing, the techniques of platypus hunting and the scientific reasons why wool itches.

Dec. 20 (PBS) Nova – “Battles in the War on Cancer: A Wonder Drug on Trial” (R) Reports on painstaking trials to determine if the new drug interleukin-2 will live up to its promise as the long-sought cancer breakthrough.

Dec. 24 (PBS) Wild America – “Timberdoodles of Moosehorn” (R) Tells the life story of the unusual woodcock, filmed at the Moosehorn Wildlife Refuge in Maine.

Dec. 25 (PBS) Life Matters – “Glaucoma” Looks at people living with a disease that takes on greater importance as millions of baby boomers reach 40, the age when glaucoma finds most of its victims.

Dec. 25 (PBS) Nature – “Miracle of the Scarlet Salmon” (R) Follows the sockeye salmon from birth in the Adams River in British Columbia through its descent in whitewater rapids and its return two years later to spawn at the site of its birth.

Dec. 26 (PBS) The First Eden – “The Wastes of War” (R) Travels to the western Mediterranean, where people began to build cities during the late period of the Roman empire.

Dec. 27 (PBS) Nova – “Battles in the War on Cancer: Breast Cancer” (R) Reports on recent research in the fight against breast cancer.

Dec. 31 (PBS) Wild America – “Minnesota Mink” (R) Follows the mink along streams near Lake Superior.

Books

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The Astronomical Almanac for the Year 1989

— Technical data for astronomy, space sciences, geodesy, surveying, navigation and other applications, prepared by the Nautical Almanac Office of the U.S. Naval Observatory and the Royal Greenwich Observatory in London. Includes phases of the moon; planetary phenomena; times of sunrise, sunset, moonrise and moonset; rotation elements for the major planets; index of observatories and lists of instruments. USGPO, 1988, approx. 520 p., hardcover, \$24.00.

I Want to be a Mathematician: An Autobiography in Three Parts

— Paul R. Halmos. Chronicles the career of this mathematician from school in the 1930s to retirement in the 1980s. Filled with anecdotes, facts, gossip and sermons about learning and teaching mathematics, it is written, says the author, “from the me of today to the me of yore, revealing some of the secrets that I desperately wanted to know then.” Originally published in hardcover by Springer-Verlag in 1985. The Mathematical Association of America, 1985, 421 p., illus., paper, \$18.00.

Nuts and Bolts of the Past: A History of American Technology, 1776-1860

— David Freeman Hawke. For the purposes of this book the author defines technology as “something that makes it possible to do something that has never been done before (the airplane), to do mechanically something previously done manually (the sewing machine), or to do more effectively something previously done mechanically (the repeating rifle).” From there he embarks on a tale of the many devices that fit this definition ranging from the cotton gin to the mass-produced clock to the first suspension bridge able to sustain railroad travel. Har-Row, 1988, 307 p., illus., hardcover, \$18.95.

Schirra's Space

— Walter M. Schirra with Richard N. Billings. The story of the Mercury, Gemini and Apollo programs told by Schirra, an astronaut who participated in all three. The authors offer a critical assessment of how NASA has strayed from the principles that led to its early success, and of some of the problems that led to the Challenger explosion in 1986. Quinlan Pr, 1988, 227 p., illus., hardcover, \$16.95.

Thinking About Science: Max Delbrück and the Origins of Molecular Biology

— Ernst Peter Fischer and Carol Lipson. Describes the life of this scientist, who in 1969 shared the Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine with Salvador Luria and Alfred Hershey. Coauthor Fischer is a science writer who was Delbrück's pupil. The biography draws from Delbrück's incomplete memoirs and scientific papers and a series of interviews in 1978 with science historian Carolyn Kopp. An honest, no-frills, witty and brilliant scientist emerges in these pages. Norton, 1988, 334 p., illus., hardcover, \$19.95.