



**Guest Handbook**

**Great Bear Rainforest Explorer**

**9 Days - Bella Bella to Klemtu**

PO Box 1318, 1790A Campbell Way, Port McNeill, BC, Canada, V0N 2R0  
Toll Free: 1-866-546-4347 International: 1-250-956-4617  
[www.kingfisher.ca](http://www.kingfisher.ca) [info@kingfisher.ca](mailto:info@kingfisher.ca)

# WELCOME

Thank you for deciding to spend your vacation kayaking with us at Kingfisher Wilderness Adventures.

The purpose of this handbook is to inform you about what to expect on your trip, provide you with important pre-trip information, and assist you in planning your trip. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions that are not covered here.

## Pre-Trip Checklist:

- **Medical Forms:** please complete and return to Kingfisher Wilderness Adventures by May 1st. Please note any dietary restrictions on the **medical form** as we do our meal planning in advance.
- **Waiver:** please read and understand. Your guides have a copy for you to sign at the pre-trip meeting.
- **Flights or Ferry reservations** to Bella Bella for the start of the tour, and from Port McNeill/Port Hardy at the finish of your tour. Reservations are advisable all summer to avoid lineups. Long weekends are especially busy.
- **Hotel reservations** in Port McNeill or Port Hardy for after kayak trip
- **Trip clothing and personal items** packed as per "What to Bring" checklist.
- **Additional travel clothing** packed for before and after kayak trip.
  - In case of flight or luggage delays, we recommend carrying essentials, such as medications, and one days kayak clothing in your carry-on bag.
- **Trip cancellation insurance:** purchase through your travel agent or other provider in case unforeseen events prevent you from going on your trip. While every policy is different most need to be purchased within days of booking your trip.
- **Medical and travel insurance:** purchase through your travel agent or other provider. Please ensure it includes wilderness activities and that it not only covers the cost of medical attention but also the cost of evacuation from a remote wilderness setting.

**What is not included on our tours:** Kingfisher does not provide transport from your home to Bella Bella and back from Port McNeill/Port Hardy. Any meals outside the kayak portion of the tour are your responsibility. As noted above, travel insurance for accidents or emergency evacuation is not provided; we recommend you purchase a policy before leaving home. The trip price does not include guide gratuities; should you feel that the service was exemplary, it is always appreciated. We suggest 5–10% of the trip cost, based on the service and attention provided.

# ITINERARY

## 9 Day Great Bear Rainforest Explorer Tour from Bella Bella to Klemtu

**Day 0 – July 21:** Plan to arrive in Shearwater (Bella Bella) the night before the kayak tour departs. You will need to arrange to fly to Bella Bella from Vancouver or Port Hardy and then take a short 10-minute water taxi (aqua bus ride) to the Shearwater Marina. There is also a ferry that day from Port Hardy to Bella Bella departing at 7:30 am and arriving at 12:50 pm. You then need a taxi for the 10 minute drive into town to catch the water taxi over to Shearwater. There is a pre-trip meeting at 7:00 pm with your guides who will provide an overview for your trip, distribute dry bags to pack your clothing, and answer any questions you may have. Pre-trip accommodations at the Shearwater Marine are included in the cost of the tour based on double occupancy. Single occupancy is available at an additional charge of \$75.

Meals Included: None

### **Day 1 - July 22:**

We meet after breakfast and take a water taxi to an island just north of Seaforth Channel to begin our kayak adventure.

Meals Included: Lunch and Dinner

**Days 2 to 8 – July 23 to 29:** This trip is run 'expedition' style, we leave our itinerary very open to ensure our flexibility. This is a beautiful area to paddle, but we must work with the conditions and remain open to adventure. Each day, your guides assess the weather, tides, and sea state to determine the destination for the day. The general plan is to begin the trip by in the islands and channels just north of Seaforth Chanel. From here we cross Millbanke Sound and through Higgins Passage to Laredo Sound. We then head north exploring Swindle Island and the southern reaches of Princess Royal Island before heading east through Meyers Pass toward Klemtu.

We can expect a combination of exposed open coastline and more protected inner passageways during this trip. Swell, wind, and open water crossings are common. As this is a nomadic tour, camp is usually moved each night. We may have an opportunity to stay two nights at one camp if conditions allow.

Meals Included: Breakfast - Lunch – Dinner

**Day 9 – July 30:** Our last morning is spent kayaking to the village of Klemtu. We arrive in the village early in the afternoon and if available we may visit the village's Big House. The ferry departs Klemtu at 4:00 pm and arrives in Port Hardy at **11:30 pm** where our van is waiting to transport the group, gear, and kayaks back to Port McNeill. If you are staying at the Black Bear or Haida-way Inn, our staff can pre-check you in and have your key available upon return to Port McNeill. You may also choose to spend the night in Port Hardy, and fly to Vancouver the next day. The cost of the ferry between Klemtu and Port Hardy is included in the tour price. You can use the comfortable chairs to sit in for the evening or for an additional cost you can rent a cabin with bunks (contact us for more details). Please note that due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances it is possible we may arrive back after this time.

Meals Included: Breakfast – Lunch

Dinner available on the ferry at guests' expense

## TRAVELLING TO BELLA BELLA (SHEARWATER)

Bella Bella is located on the Central Coast of the mainland of British Columbia. You can reach Bella Bella by air or water. There are no roads to Bella Bella. Shearwater is located on Danny Island, just outside of Bella Bella.

### Flying:

Flights to Bella Bella (ZEL), depart from the south terminal of Vancouver International Airport (YVR) and are approximately 2 hours. These flights are operated by [Pacific Coastal Airlines](#).

Pacific Coastal Airlines      [www.pacific-coastal.com](http://www.pacific-coastal.com)      604-273-8666      1-800-663-2872

### Ferry

You can also take the ferry between Bella Bella and Port Hardy (Vancouver Island). On July 21 there is a ferry departing Port Hardy at 7:30 am and arriving in Bella Bella at 12:50 pm. On the ferry you can use the comfortable chairs to sit in or for an additional cost you can rent a cabin with bunks.

BC Ferries      [www.bcferrries.com](http://www.bcferrries.com)      NA      1-888-223-3779

### Transportation to Shearwater

From the Bella Bella Airport take the 10-minute shuttle run by Starr Taxi to the Municipal Dock in Bella Bella. Starr Taxi meets every flight to and from Bella Bella: look for their white vans. The Shearwater Resort runs a scheduled water taxi to and from the Municipal Dock to the Resort for \$5:

DEPART SHEARWATER	DEPART BELLA BELLA
7:45 am Mon-Sat (Sun by Request)	8:00 am Saturday
9:00 am Daily	9:30 am Daily
10:00 am Daily	11:00 am Daily
11:30 am Daily	12:00 pm Daily
12:30 pm Daily	1:00 pm Daily
1:30 pm Daily	2:30 pm Daily
3:30 pm Daily	4:00 pm Daily
4:30 pm Daily	5:00 pm Daily
5:30 pm Daily	6:00 pm Daily
6:30 pm Daily	7:00 pm Daily
7:30 pm Daily	8:00 pm Daily
8:30 pm Daily	9:00 pm Daily
9:30 pm Daily	10:00 pm Daily

Starr Taxi      N/A      250-957 2582  
Shearwater Water Taxi      [www.shearwater.ca](http://www.shearwater.ca)      250-957-2540      1-800-663-2370

### Shearwater Accommodations

On tours starting in Bella Bella, the accommodation at the Shearwater Resort is included in your tour price. This is based on double occupancy. The rooms only have one double bed in them. For single occupancy, we will add \$75 to your invoice.

Shearwater Resort      [www.shearwater.ca](http://www.shearwater.ca)      250-957-2666      1-800-663-2370

# TRAVELLING FROM PORT MCNEILL

Port McNeill is located on Northern Vancouver Island. You can get there by plane, bus or (rental) car.

## Driving:

If driving to Port McNeill you need to sail on [BC Ferries](#) from the Vancouver area to either Nanaimo or Victoria on Vancouver Island. From Washington State, [Coho Ferry](#) sails between Port Angeles and Victoria. Drive time from Victoria to Port McNeill is approximately 5.5 hours and from Nanaimo to Port McNeill is approximately 4 hours.

Driving to Port McNeill is quite straightforward. From Victoria drive north on highway 1 to Nanaimo. From Nanaimo, head north on Highway 19 until you see the sign for Port McNeill. Port McNeill is 1 minute off the main highway. The only other option to this route is north of Nanaimo just before you reach Parksville you can take the seaside route on Highway 19A. This route rejoins the main Highway 19 at Campbell River. The seaside route may add an extra hour to your trip.

BC Ferries	<a href="http://www.bcferries.com">www.bcferries.com</a>	NA	1-888-223-3779
Coho Ferry	<a href="http://www.cohoferry.com">www.cohoferry.com</a>	250-386-2202	1-800 264 6475
Budget Car Rental	<a href="http://www.budget.ca">www.budget.ca</a>	250-760-7368	1-800-268-8900

## Flying:

Flights to Port Hardy (YZT), the closest airport to Port McNeill, depart from the south terminal of Vancouver International Airport (YVR) and are approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes. These flights are operated by [Pacific Coastal Airlines](#). Port Hardy airport is a 30 minute [taxi ride](#) from Port McNeill.

If flying with [Air Canada](#) or one of its partners, and you are not planning to visit Vancouver, you may want to check on flying to either Nanaimo (YCD), Victoria (YYJ) or Campbell River (YBL) on Vancouver Island. While you would still need to rent a car or take the bus it saves you the time and cost of the ferry.

Another option is to fly via Calgary (YYC) or Edmonton (YEG) to Comox (YQQ) on Vancouver Island with [WestJet Airlines](#). Comox is about 2 1/2 – 3 hour drive south of Port McNeill.

[Kenmore Air](#) operates float plane service to Port McNeill from Seattle, Washington.

Pacific Coastal Airlines	<a href="http://www.pacific-coastal.com">www.pacific-coastal.com</a>	604-273-8666	1-800-663-2872
WestJet Airlines	<a href="http://www.westjet.com">www.westjet.com</a>	403-444-2446	1-888-937-8538
Air Canada	<a href="http://www.aircanada.com">www.aircanada.com</a>	514-393-3333	1-888-247-2262
Kenmore Air	<a href="http://www.kenmoreair.com">www.kenmoreair.com</a>	425-486-1257	1-866-435-9524
Waivin Flags Taxi	<a href="http://waivinflags.com">http://waivinflags.com</a>	250-230-7655	N/A

## Bus:

[Tofino Bus](#) operates once daily bus service between Victoria and Port McNeill. Connections can be made from Vancouver in Nanaimo. They offer savings if booking 3 or 7 days in advance.

Tofino Bus	<a href="http://www.tofinobus.com">www.tofinobus.com</a>	250-725-2871	1-866-986-3466
------------	--	--------------	----------------

## Recommended Port McNeill Accommodations

Black Bear Resort	<a href="http://www.blackbearresort.net">www.blackbearresort.net</a>	250-956-4900	1-866-956-4900
Haida Way Motor Inn	<a href="http://www.pmhotels.com">www.pmhotels.com</a>	250-956-3373	1-800-956-3373
Dalewood Inn	<a href="http://www.tripadvisor.ca">www.tripadvisor.ca</a>	250-956-3304	NA
Sportsman Inn	<a href="http://www.mcneillsinn...">www.mcneillsinn...</a>	NA	1-866-888-3466
Ocean Comfort B&B	<a href="http://www.oceancomfort.net">www.oceancomfort.net</a>	250-956-0002	N/A

# WHAT TO BRING

While the summer months in British Columbia are mostly warm and sunny, we still have a few cool and wet days. After all, the coast of British Columbia is the world's largest temperate rainforest. For maximum enjoyment on your trip in all types of weather please bring the items listed below.

It is important that your clothing be made of **synthetic materials or wool** to retain their warmth when wet. Most synthetics also have the advantage of being quick drying. **Avoid cotton clothing** because they lack warmth if wet and take a very long time to dry. All of the items listed below need to fit into four dry bags (which we supply). If you have any questions on what you need to bring please feel free to contact us.

## **Sleeping bag** - fits into 20 litre dry bag

We supply sleeping bags, liners, and pillows to all guests but if you prefer to bring your own we recommend:

- A three season synthetic insulated bag

## **Clothing** - fits into 20 litre dry bag

To ensure your comfort in the event of wet and cold conditions, please bring everything listed below. Long underwear (synthetic or wool) may be considered a winter item, but it is common for guides to wear them. It can make a world of difference on a cool summer evening and can double as leggings under shorts during the day. A warm hat is also a great way to prevent heat loss. Proper layers will work wonderfully to ensure you warmth and happiness.

- 1 pairs of shorts
- 2 pair of pants
- 2 long sleeve shirts
- 2 short sleeve shirts
- 2 sweaters or sweatshirts
- 6 to 10 pairs of socks
- 2 sets of long underwear
- 6 to 13 pairs of underwear
- 1 swimsuit
- 1 fleece jacket
- 1 baseball cap or sun hat
- 1 wool or fleece cap

## **Rain gear** - fits into 10 litre dry bag

We provide waterproof kayaking jackets but you still need rain gear for around camp. Rain gear does not need to be breathable but it should be waterproof - not water-repellent.

- 1 waterproof rain jacket with hood or rain hat
- 1 pair of waterproof rain pants

## **Personal items** - fits into 10 litre dry bag

- Toiletries
- Sun screen
- Sunglasses with a retainer
- Prescription eyeglasses or contacts
- Spare eyeglasses or contacts
- Wet Wipes
- Insect repellent
- Bug head net (optional)
- Medication
- Spare medication
- Synthetic camp towel
- Book
- Flashlight or headlamp and batteries
- Camera
- Extra digital storage and batteries

**Footwear** – You will need one pair of watersport shoes for paddling and one pair of closed shoes (or light hiking boots) to wear around camp.

- For paddling, we highly recommend proper watersport shoes such as closed-toe Keens or Teva sandals with straps, neoprene booties, or running shoes/trainers that can get wet.
- For your safety and protection, flip flops and open sandals are not acceptable for our tours due to rocky and often slippery shorelines.

# WHAT TO BRING

## Optional Items to Bring

- Rubber boots (some guests prefer these instead of wet shoes or sandals for kayaking. But, if you go too deep when entering or exiting your kayak the boots will be wet for the remainder of the trip). Some guests may prefer to wear rubber boots around camp or on the beach.
- Wool or fleece gloves or mitts (if your hands easily get cold these are good to have for the evenings)
- Paddling or cycling gloves (we provide kayaking mitts for warmth, but if you are prone to blisters you may find cycling or paddling gloves to be beneficial).
- Farmer Jane/John wet suit to wear kayaking.

**Guests who wish to use personal gear such as PFDs, paddles, sleeping bags, etc must bring items to the pre-trip meeting to allow your guides to determine if they are suitable for your tour.**

## What to Bring

Your enjoyment, comfort, and safety are dependent upon having the proper clothing. It is important that your clothing be made of synthetic materials or wool to retain their warmth when wet. Most synthetics also have the advantage of being quick drying. Avoid cotton clothing because they lack warmth if wet and will take a very long time to dry. If you have any questions on what you need to bring please feel free to contact us.

## Getting Your Feet Wet

Plan to get your feet wet. Getting off the water taxi when arriving at camp, you can expect to step into ankle deep water. When getting in and out of kayaks you need to step into water that may be as deep as your shins. Flip flop (thong) type sandals are not be worn as they are very unstable on slippery beaches. Water shoes or sandals must securely fasten to your feet.

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## Physical Fitness

Most guests consider the physical exertion level needed on our Great Bear Rainforest tour to range from easy to moderate. If you are not normally a moderately active person or do not use your upper body much you may find a few weeks of light exercise before your trip will enhance your enjoyment. Swimming a few times a week for three to four weeks before your trip is a great way to get your kayaking muscles into shape.

## Carrying Gear and Kayaks

Each trip brings in supplies for the trip on the same ferry as the guests. This includes all the guests' personal gear, sleeping bags, tents, plus all food and drinking water for the trip. Guests should be able to carry 20 to 35 pounds. However, we can accommodate most guests who have physical limitations. Please discuss these with us and disclose them on your medical form.

- Water canisters weigh 22 pounds and food boxes weigh up to 35 pounds.
- We ask all guests to help load and unload the ferry and move supplies.
- Kayaks are kept above the high tide line on shore and must be carried up to 100 meters to and from the water each day.
- Single kayaks weigh about 60 pounds when empty. At least two people carry empty single kayaks.
- Double kayaks weigh about 100 pounds when empty. At least four people carry empty double kayaks.
- Kayaks are often moved with gear and supplies packed in them. Due to this additional weight at least four people will help move packed single kayaks and at least six people to move packed double kayaks.

## Snacks and Water Bottles

A variety of snack bars and individual water bottles are provided to all guests during the trip. We often stop for short snack and water breaks while kayaking. Guests are welcome to bring additional personal snacks and their own water bottles if they wish. Personal snacks are to be kept in your kayak (not in your tent) so that little critters do not chew into your personal belongings.

## Alcohol

Guests are welcome to purchase and bring wine, beer, or spirits on trips. You can purchase wine, beer, and spirits at the Shearwater store. Guests are strongly encouraged to make their purchases prior to the pre-trip meeting.

Please be advised that for safety reasons, alcohol may only be consumed after the completion of the days paddling. Guests are expected to be responsible when consuming alcohol. For the comfort and safety of all guests, drunkenness is not allowed. Please be mindful that space is limited on expedition trips. The use of illicit drugs is also prohibited.



# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## **Camp Cleanliness**

To keep our camps clean and free of food (and food like) odours, we have a few requests. We'd like all guests to remember that no food or drinks are to go to your tent area. In addition to no food, no scented items are to go to the tent areas. This includes soap, toothpaste, deodorant, and sunscreen.

## **Hand Washing**

Good sanitary practices are extremely important and it all begins with frequent hand washing. Your guides go over some basics on proper wilderness hand cleaning techniques both at the pre-trip meeting and at the base camp.

## **Hair and body washing**

Fresh water can be collected from streams when possible and your guides will instruct the group in proper low impact methods to bathe. Due to the nomadic nature of these tours we do not provide solar showers (they very rarely warm thoroughly). We provide biodegradable soap for your use. Some guests find "Wet Wipes" to be a satisfactory substitute.

## **Brushing Teeth**

To keep the camp clean and free of odours that may attract animals we ask that all teeth brushing is done on the beach below the high tide line. Spitting and rinsing is done right into the ocean.

## **Toilets**

Some sites we may visit on these tours may have pit or composting toilets available. Many will have no toilet facilities at all. Depending upon the area different methods may be used to effectively manage human waste which your guides will instruct in as necessary. All toilet paper is either burned or packed out. Each tour has a group toilet bag that includes toilet paper, hand sanitizer and zip lock bags for used paper and sanitary products.

## **Feminine hygiene products**

Wilderness travel can cause changes in menstrual cycles. So, even if unexpected, we suggest that female guests bring a supply of feminine hygiene products for the trip. All sanitary products are packed out and zip lock bags are included in our toilet bag for disposal.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Cell Phones

To maintain the natural setting during your tour, we ask that use of technology be restricted to your tents and not be used in communal areas of camp. Ringers should be silenced so not to disturb the enjoyment of others in this wilderness setting. Better still, turn it off all together. You are on holiday.

We understand that many people use their cell phone cameras for their vacation photography. We just ask that they are not used for calls and texting during your tour. If you must text or make a call when cell reception is available, we request that it be done out of earshot of other guests, away from the group.

### Photography

Photos are a great way to share and reminisce about your experiences with us. However, you have to be careful you don't spend your whole time looking through a view finder in the attempt to document everything or trying to get the "perfect" photo. When your time is spent this way you may miss a lot of the beauty and action that is all around you. Sometimes you just have to put the camera away and sit back and take it all in.

That being said, we recognize many guests will want to bring their cameras on their trip and this is completely fine. We often enjoy taking photos while we are kayaking too. Visit our blog to learn about [kayak photography](#), including pros and cons of different camera types, considerations needed on how to carry and store these cameras while kayaking, and details on charging your camera.

### Camera Batteries

We have no way to recharge camera batteries on our expedition style tours so it is important that you bring any additional batteries you may need. Check out our blog for suggestions for additional information on [power packs and batteries](#).

### Fishing

Our Whales and Wilderness Explorer tours are primarily wildlife viewing focused; however, limited opportunities may exist for kayak fishing. Visit our blog to learn more about [fishing during your kayak tour](#).

# PAPERWORK

## Waiver

In order to join the trip that you have booked, we require that you sign a waiver at your pre-trip meeting. A copy of the waiver is included with this handbook for your review. Please ensure you have read and understand the waiver prior to arriving at the meeting. Seek legal advice if you have any questions. If you do not sign the waiver at the pre-trip meeting we have no choice but to regard this as a last minute cancellation of your trip, with no notice, and consequently provide no refund.

## Parental Consent

A parental consent addendum to the waiver is required to be completed at the pre-trip meeting for all guests under the age of 19. If the child's parent or legal guardian is not accompanying them on the trip please contact us to discuss our further requirements.

## Medical form

Please complete the [on-line medical form](#) in full at least one month prior to your tour's departure date. As all our tours operate in wilderness settings, the more information we have in advance of the trip the better we can prepare. In the unlikely event of an emergency this form may be provided to outside medical attendants, so please ensure it is accurate. Please feel free to contact us with any questions regarding the medical form.

## Travel Medical Insurance

While unlikely, a medical evacuation plus any required medical attention can be expensive and all costs are the responsibility of the guest. For this reason we highly recommend purchasing adequate medical and travel insurance through your travel agent or other provider. You should ensure this covers you for wilderness activities, the cost of medical attention, and the cost of evacuation from a remote wilderness setting.

## Tetanus

Tetanus, also known as lockjaw, is a serious illness caused by tetanus bacteria. The bacteria live in soil, saliva, dust and manure. If you get tetanus there is usually a long course of treatment. The tetanus vaccine can prevent tetanus but its protection does not last forever. Adults should get a tetanus shot, or booster, every 10 years. Without a current tetanus shot, if you were to get cut on your trip (even a minor cut) we would require you to be evacuated from the trip at your own expense for medical care. With a current tetanus shot, if the cut is manageable in the field you would likely be able to continue the trip.

## Medication

Please include all prescription, non-prescription and homeopathic medications plus any vitamins or herbal supplements you may be taking. For medications that must be taken regularly please bring a second supply in a crush-proof and UV-proof container clearly marked with drug name, dose and instructions clearly labeled. Please have separate containers for each medication. Provide this second supply to your guide at the pre-trip meeting and for them to store it in a separate waterproof container just in case your main supply gets lost or destroyed.

Please note that we do not provide medications on our trips, even something as basic as aspirin or Tylenol.

# REDUCE YOUR FOOTPRINT

We know that our guests share our love of the natural world. Here are some ways you can reduce your impact on the environment when you join one of our tours.

## Before You Leave Home

- Set your water heater to low
- Turn off your air conditioning/heat or change your thermostat setting
- Turn off & unplug lights and electronics, as they can still use power when they are plugged in
- Turn off your ice maker
- Call to suspend your newspaper delivery

## Pack Eco-consciously

- Pack light, to reduce weight and therefore carbon emissions
- Take advantage of the fact that we provide kayaks, tents, bedding, and dry bags, rather than bringing your own, unless you will be using them on another segment of your trip
- Although we do provide water bottles and mugs on tour, if you have room consider packing a travel mug, reusable water bottle, and shopping bag, to reduce your use of single-use items en route
- Pack your own toiletries in reusable travel-sized containers rather than using the miniature toiletries supplied by hotels

## Transportation

- Your travel carbon footprint varies greatly depending on how far you are travelling, how many people you are travelling with, and what form of transportation you use. To weigh out the most environmentally-friendly options, see [this chart](#) by The Union of Concerned Scientists.
- Travelling by bus is the greenest option
- When flying, choose to fly economy over first class and choose the most direct flight route
- If renting a car, choose the smallest, most fuel-efficient car as possible
- Use our [RideShare](#) page to carpool with other guests
- Consider purchasing carbon offsets for your transportation footprint. The David Suzuki Foundation provides a good [overview](#) of carbon offsetting. [Less](#) and [Offsetters](#) are two highly-ranked ([Gold Standard](#)-certified) organizations through which you can purchase offsets.

## Invasive Species

- To prevent the spread of invasive plants, please ensure your footwear and any personal camping gear you may be bringing has been cleaned of any mud and seeds.
- The use and transport of watercraft, including kayaks, can spread aquatic invasive species in coastal areas. If you are bringing your own kayak on one of our tours please inspect and clean your boat and ensure all bilge water is drained. If possible, rinse your boat and equipment that normally gets wet with hot tap water (greater than 50°C), or dry your boat and equipment in the sun for at least 5 days before transporting them to another body of water.

# WILDLIFE VIEWING ETIQUETTE

One of the greatest attractions to our trips is the wide variety of wildlife we may encounter while paddling. Our guides are well versed in the areas we kayak, the habits of the local wildlife, and they regularly communicate with other kayakers, whale watchers, and researchers to improve our wildlife viewing possibilities. But please keep in mind that wildlife is just that, wild, and we cannot guarantee any wildlife sightings.

When we do encounter wildlife we have some basic rules that must be followed to ensure that wildlife is not adversely affected by our presence. At your pre-trip meeting your guides review our approach to wildlife viewing both on the water as well as on land.

We have listed below some of the animals we receive the most questions about as well as our approach to viewing and dealing with them. We may see many other animals and birds that are not listed below. The main goal when viewing any wildlife is not to disturb their normal activities. Your guides instruct you to stay close together as a group when viewing any wildlife and position the group appropriately to minimize any disturbance to the wildlife. Feeding of wild animals is strictly forbidden. There are provincial and federal laws that can result in fines and/or jail terms for feeding wildlife.

While kayaking, our approach to viewing orcas and other marine mammals varies depending upon their behaviour. Quite often we form a tight group by "rafting" our kayaks together so that we do not form an obstacle course they need to maneuver. We may paddle alongside orcas at a reasonable distance as they travel but we must be careful not to cross in front of them. Approaching too close or placing ourselves in their path may force them to change their route and normal behaviours.

## **Orcas**

Northern Resident orca and Transient (Biggs) orca sightings occur in the areas we paddle, usually from mid-July through mid-September and intermittently during other months. The main goal when paddling with orcas is not to disturb their normal activities. To achieve this, we do not approach any closer than 200 metres to travelling, feeding or resting orcas.

## **Whales, dolphins and porpoises**

Humpback whales are frequently seen in the areas we paddle. We also occasionally sight Pacific White Sided dolphins and Harbour and Dall's porpoises. As with orcas, the main goal is not to disturb their normal activities and we do not approach any closer than 100 metres to travelling, feeding or resting cetaceans.

## **Seals and Sea lions**

Harbour seals and Steller sea lions pose another set of concerns that whales do not. We may often see seal and sea lions hauled out of the water on rocks. This is an important time for them to rest. The closest we should approach is 100 metres but if the animals seem agitated by our presence at greater distances we give them even more room.

Visit [www.kingfisher.ca/whale\\_watching\\_guidelines\\_for\\_kayakers.htm](http://www.kingfisher.ca/whale_watching_guidelines_for_kayakers.htm) for more info on marine mammal viewing guidelines.

# WILDLIFE VIEWING ETIQUETTE

## Black Bears and Grizzly Bears

Black bears are quite common on our expedition style trips. Grizzly bears also live in parts of the Great Bear Rainforest and we can come across one on this tour. When we see bears it is usually from our kayaks as they forage for food along the tide line. When in our kayaks we approach from downwind and come no closer than 100 metres, keeping noise to a minimum. If the bears become aware of our presence we immediately back away.

To ensure bears do not become habituated to kayakers and associate people and kayaks with food we must follow some basic procedures when in camp. All food, trash and recyclables must be properly stored to minimize scent and access. No food, gum, toiletries or other scented items are to be taken into tents at any time. If leaving camp take a "buddy" and make a lot of noise in the woods so as not to surprise an animal. Your guides cover basic precautions to be taken to avoid animal conflicts at your pre-trip meeting.

## Wolves

The Central Coast has a population of coastal wolves that if we are lucky, we get to see on our tours. It is one of the shyest and most elusive creatures in the area that usually stays far from human activity. We do often spot their tracks in the sand, but it is rarer to spot a wolf walking down the beach in search for seafood.

To ensure wolves do not become habituated to kayakers and associate people and kayaks with food we must follow the same procedures we apply to bears and other wildlife when handling food and other scented items.

## Cougars

Cougars are rarely seen on our trips but they are present throughout British Columbia. We have had five sightings in 17 years and each sighting was without incident. Like all cats, cougars can be curious but due to the size of our groups they usually avoid us as much as possible. In the unlikely event that we do encounter a cougar, below are a few points to keep in mind:

- Stay calm and keep the cougar in view. Pick up children immediately. Back away slowly, ensuring that the animal has a clear avenue of escape. Make yourself look as large as possible. Never run or turn your back on a cougar.
- If the cat shows intense interest or follows you, respond aggressively. Maintain eye contact with the cat, show your teeth and make loud noises. Arm yourself with rocks or sticks as weapons. Crouch down as little as possible when picking things up off the ground.
- If the cougar attacks, fight back. Keep the animal in front of you at all times. Convince the cougar you are a threat, not prey. Use anything you can as a weapon. Focus your attack on the cougar's face and eyes.

We do not wish to alarm our guests and we have never had a problem encounter with any wild animals. We wish to keep it that way by following the above precautions. For more info on bear and cougar safety, visit [www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/conservation/bearsandcougars.pdf](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/conservation/bearsandcougars.pdf) .

## GRIZZLY BEAR VIEWING

If you have opted to add a Grizzly tour in Port McNeill after your Great Bear Rainforest Explorer tour, please be advised of the following information:

The grizzly bear viewing day trips are operated by our friends at Sea Wolf Adventures. They are a separate company from Kingfisher.

Meet at 6:45am at Sea Wolf's office at 1514 Broughton Blvd. in Port McNeil (same building as MacKay Whale Watching). These times may change due to weather and tides. You will return around 5:00pm to Port McNeill.

The use of photographic flashes or strobes is not permitted. Flashes will disturb the bears.

Avoid the use of perfumes, aftershaves, deodorants, insect repellents or any potent fragrance. Strong scents will disturb the bears.

Avoid bright and/or flashy clothing such as red, white, yellow, and orange.

For your comfort and convenience, we recommend bringing:

- Sturdy walking/hiking shoes, preferably waterproof
- Dress warm (layers of synthetic, quick-dry clothes)
- Light-weight waterproof jacket and pants
- Sunhat, unscented sunscreen, sunglasses
- Water bottle
- Camera, memory cards, batteries, monopod

Included in the tour:

- Boat Transportation
- Breakfast, lunch, snacks, and drinks
- Binoculars
- Rain Poncho (sizes small to large)
- Cultural sustainability fee

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Before you join us this summer please visit and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter by clicking the icons below.



Many of our guests enjoy sharing their experiences, photos, and video on social media. To make it easier to share photos and videos from your kayak tour with your fellow guests add the hashtag #KingfisherWildernessAdventures to your social media posts.

Hashtags don't work as well on Facebook so tagging our page, Kingfisher Wilderness Adventures, on your posts also makes them easier to find. Here are directions for [tagging Facebook photos and videos](#).



## FEEDBACK

About two weeks after your kayak tour you will receive an email from us with a link to an online feedback form. While we love to hear what we do well, we also want to hear about areas that we may be able to improve. In the unlikely event something is really not right; please don't wait until after your tour to bring it to your guides' attention. It is too late to fix it for you at that point. Please let us know immediately and we will do our best to make things right. But please keep in mind, no matter how good your guides are they still can't control the weather and the wildlife.