



## **Guest Handbook**

# **Whales and Grizzly Bears Base Camp**

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:

- Trip Cancellation and Interruption 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 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.
- **Medical Forms:** please complete and return to Kingfisher Wilderness Adventures no later than one month before your trip's departure date. Please note any dietary restrictions on the [medical form](#).
- **Waiver:** please read and understand. You will sign the waiver at the pre-trip meeting.
- **COVID Pre-Screening Questionnaire:** please read and understand. You will complete the form at the pre-trip meeting.
- Transportation to Port McNeill: Flight or car rental reservations if necessary.
- Ferry reservations if you are driving from Vancouver to Vancouver Island: reservations are highly recommended all summer to avoid lineups. Fridays and Long weekends are especially busy.
- Hotel reservations in Port McNeill for before and 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 day's kayak clothing in your carry-on bag.

**What is not included on our tours:** Kingfisher does not provide transport from your home to Port McNeill. Any meals outside the kayak portion of the tour are your responsibility. As noted above, travel insurance for cancellations, 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.

## IMPORTANT TIMES:

**The night before your kayak tour:** The night before your trip starts you meet your guides at 8:00pm in our office at 1790A Campbell Way, Port McNeill for a pre-trip orientation meeting. We are 100 meters down the hill from the Black Bear Resort and just across the street from the Haida Way Motor Inn.

**The morning you leave on your kayak tour:** You meet the group around 7:45 am at our office on Campbell Way in Port McNeill. The exact time to meet is set at the pre-trip meeting. Our van transports you and your gear to the water taxi dock. It is imperative that you have already checked out of your hotel and had breakfast as the water taxi runs on a tight schedule.

**The day you return from your kayak tour:** We return to our office by approximately 5:00 pm. Please note that due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances it is possible we may arrive back after this time. For this reason we suggest staying in Port McNeill the last night of the trip so you are not rushing to try and catch flights or ferries. Most guests choose this option and get together for a no-host farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

# ITINERARY

*Exact kayaking routes may vary depending on possible wildlife sightings, currents, tides and weather.*

**Day 0:** Plan to be in Port McNeill the night before the kayak tour departs. There is a pre-trip meeting at 8:00 pm with your guides at our office, located at 1790A Campbell Way, across the street from the Haida Way Inn and next to the Black Bear Resort. Your guides provide you with an overview for your trip, distribute dry bags to pack your clothing, and answer any questions you may have.

*Meals Included: None*

**Day 1:** We meet in the morning to head down to the marina to load our water taxi. Vehicles and extra luggage can be left at your hotel while you are on your kayak tour. If you are not staying at a hotel or B&B with parking, we have limited free parking and luggage storage available at our office.

The 45 to 60 minute water taxi ride takes us to our base camp. Upon arrival at the base camp your guides provide a site orientation, plus a kayak and safety briefing. We kayak for a short time before lunch, giving you time to get used to the kayaks, the wilderness setting, and each other. The afternoon is spent kayaking and viewing the area's diverse wildlife.

*Meals Included: Lunch – Dinner*

**Days 2 and 3:** Each day brings a new journey; our base camp is ideally situated for exploring the area. The base camp is located on killer whale travel routes and humpback whales often feed within sight of camp. The islands and small islets close to the camp are home to numerous sea birds, bald eagles, and seals. There is always plenty to see.

Both killer whales and humpback whales regularly pass by our camp, and we have enjoyed many dinner shows from the beach. When we encounter killer whales on the water, we often drop a hydrophone into the water so we can listen to their vocalizations.

Your kayak guides plan each day according to weather conditions, wildlife viewing opportunities, and guest interests. Lunches are usually spent on a secluded beach. We return late each afternoon to the comforts of the base camp.

Every day is different, but rest assured, our goals are the same as yours-- exploring, kayaking, whale watching, wildlife viewing, and enjoying the scenery.

*Meals Included: Breakfast - Lunch – Dinner*

**Day 4:** Today is an early start. We are picked up at our camp around 7:30am by Sea Wolf Adventures for our day of grizzly bear viewing. We arrive back in Port McNeill around 5:00 pm where our van is waiting to drive us back to the Kingfisher office. The timing of the bear tour is flexible to improve viewing opportunities so a later arrival back in Port McNeill is possible.

We strongly suggest that our guests spend the last night in Port McNeill, enjoy a hot shower, and

slowly transition out of vacation mode. Most guests choose to do this, and guests and guides often get together for a no-host farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

*Meals Included: Breakfast – Lunch*

## **Grizzly Bear Viewing Considerations**

During the grizzly bear viewing portion of this tour the use of photographic flashes or strobes is not permitted. Flashes will disturb the bears.

Avoid bright and/or flashy clothing such as red, white, yellow, and orange. Avoid the use of perfumes, aftershaves, deodorants, insect repellents or any potent fragrance. Strong scents will disturb the bears.

For your comfort and convenience, we recommend:

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

# TRAVELLING TO PORT MCNEILL

If driving from the Vancouver area on the Mainland of British Columbia to Port McNeill you need to sail on [BC Ferries](#) 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.

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 you are planning on renting a car on Vancouver Island (and not stopping in Vancouver), you can also fly with [Air Canada](#) to either Nanaimo (YCD), Victoria (YYJ) or Campbell River (YBL) on Vancouver Island. Another option is to fly with [WestJet Airlines](#) via Calgary (YYC) or Edmonton (YEG) to Comox (YQQ) on Vancouver Island. Comox is about 2 1/2 hour drive south of Port McNeill.

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

Transportation	Website	Phone	Toll Free
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
BC Ferries	<a href="http://www.bcferrries.com">www.bcferrries.com</a>	N/A	1-888-223-3779
Coho Ferry	<a href="http://www.cohoferry.com">www.cohoferry.com</a>	250-386-2202	1 800 264 6475
Waivin Flags Taxi	<a href="http://www.waivinflags.com">www.waivinflags.com</a>	250-230-8294	N/A

## Recommended Port McNeill Accommodations

Black Bear Resort	<a href="http://www.blackbearresort.net">www.blackbearresort.net</a>	250-956-4900	1-866-956-4900
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## Additional Port McNeill Hotels/Resorts/Campgrounds

Humpback Inn	<a href="http://www.humpbackinn.com">www.humpbackinn.com</a>	250-956-3131	1-888-956-3131
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	N/A
Ocean Comfort B&B	<a href="http://www.oceancomfort.net">www.oceancomfort.net</a>	250-956-0002	N/A
Cluwewe Resort	<a href="http://www.cluxeweresort.com">www.cluxeweresort.com</a>	250-949-0378	N/A
Broughton Strait Campground	<a href="#">Facebook</a>	250-956-3224	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 40 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. Keep in mind, a full change of paddling clothes will travel with you in your kayak.

- 1 pairs of short
- 2 pair of pants
- 2 long sleeve shirts
- 2 short sleeve shirts
- 1 sweater or sweatshirt
- 3 to 4 pairs of socks
- 2 sets of long underwear
- 3 to 4 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
- Medication
- Spare medication
- Insect repellent (optional)
- Book
- Flashlight or headlamp and batteries

- Wet Wipes
- Synthetic camp towel
- Camera
- Extra digital storage and batteries

**Footwear** – to be worn or packed loose.

- You need one pair of watersport shoes for paddling and one pair of closed shoes to wear around camp. There is lots of space for extra footwear on our base camp tours.
- 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 the grizzly bear viewing tour, we recommend wearing hiking boots, that are preferably waterproof.
- For your safety and protection, flip flops and open sandals are not acceptable for our tours due to rocky and often slippery shorelines.
- Rubber boots can be difficult to pack, but have proven to be a good choice for some of our guests. 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.

### **Optional Items to Bring**

- 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**

In addition to the items on the "What to Bring" list above; base camp guests can be a little more liberal in what they bring. For example a musical instrument like a travel guitar may be possible if we have advance notice.



# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## 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 to be worn as they are very unstable on slippery beaches. Water shoes or sandals must securely fasten to your feet.

## Physical Fitness

Most guests consider the physical exertion level needed on our base camp trips 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 3 to 4 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 water taxi as the guests. This includes all the guests' personal gear, sleeping bags, and pillows 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 unload the water taxi and move the supplies 75 to 100 feet to the camp.
- Kayaks are stored at the camp and must be carried up to 75 feet to and from the water each day.
- Single kayaks weigh about 60 pounds when empty. At least two people carry single kayaks.
- Double kayaks weigh 80 to 100 pounds when empty. At least four people carry double kayaks.
- If kayaks have additional gear and weight in them additional people help carry the 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 our camp storage box (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. There are three locations to purchase wine, beer, and spirits in Port McNeill. Guests are strongly encouraged to make their purchases prior to the pre-trip meeting.

- BC liquor store: 1705 Campbell Way
- Haida Way Inn: 1817 Campbell Way
- Dalewood Inn: 1703 Broughton Blvd

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. The use of illicit drugs is also prohibited.

# **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

## **Camp Cleanliness**

To keep our camp 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. Your guides instruct you on the appropriate storage of these items at the pre-trip meeting.

## **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**

Our base camp has a rain catchment system and a safari style bucket shower; however this is not like your shower at home. The water is heated on the campstove or campfire and most guests use less than 10 litres of water per shower, enough to get themselves wet, lathered up and rinsed again. We provide biodegradable soap for your use in the shower. Some guests find "Wet Wipes" to be a satisfactory substitute. Please note that if we have has a prolonged dry spell there may not be enough fresh water available for the shower.

Wildlife and other guests can be sensitive to strong scents. We ask that you leave perfumes and colognes in town.

## **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**

While our base camp has a pit toilet most other sites we stop at have no facilities whatsoever. Depending upon the area different methods may be used which your guides 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 Phone Use

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 stay. 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 camp.

## Charging Station

The base camp is equipped with a solar powered charging station for digital and video camera batteries. Please bring your charger and an adapter for North American style plugs if necessary (we still suggest bringing extra batteries). Please be advised that charging of guide safety equipment takes priority to ensure your safety during the trip.

## 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.

## Fishing

Our base camp tours are primarily wildlife viewing focused and are not the best suited for kayak fishing compared to some of our other tours. 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 in the [Pre-Departure Information](#). 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. A copy is included with this handbook for your review. 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 [online 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, not even something as basic as aspirin or Tylenol.

# 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 behaviour. 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 can occur anywhere around our base camps, 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 our website for more info on [marine mammal viewing guidelines](#).

### **Black Bears**

Black bears are quite common on our expedition style trips but are rarely seen around our base camp. When we do see black 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.

### **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).



## 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 #KayakWithWhales 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.

## 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. However, 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.

# 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 and 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
- 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.