



# W@T@Rw@Y@S

Natural History Coastal Adventures

FALL 2009

## Bluewater Milestones 1974-2009

- 1974 – *Whitewater Adventures* started by Dan Culver
- 1977 – *Sailing voyages* start in the Gulf Islands, Desolation Sound and Johnstone Strait
- 1983 - *Island Roamer* built by Cooper Boating
- 1985 – *Whitewater Adventures* (river rafting trips) sold. *Sailing voyages* now operated by *Bluewater Adventures*.
- 1986 - *First trips* to Alaska and the Queen Charlotte Islands.
- 1987 - *Prince Philip* goes whale watching aboard *Island Roamer*
- 1988 - *Randy Burke* takes over from *Dan Culver*
- 1996 – *Snow Goose* operates first Southeast Alaska trips
- 2003 – *Purchase* of sister-ship *Island Odyssey*
- 2007 – *Selected* by *National Geographic Traveler* as "One of the Worlds 50 Best Trips"
- 2008 – *Bluewater* goes Carbon Neutral and received Northern Advancement Award from Northern BC Tourism.
- 2009 – *35th Anniversary* – *Selected* by *National Geographic Adventure* as "One of the Best Travel Companies on Earth"

## Gratitude - Bluewater Celebrates 35 Years!

We have just enjoyed an amazing year of trips – our 35th! The weather was unbelievably good and the wildlife plentiful. Being surrounded by nature's beauty washes away the fears and concerns so often overwhelming our daily lives. There is a peacefulness away from the daily media, email and cell phones; grounded in the cycles of tide, sun and weather.

Of course, there are conservation concerns. I believe each of us who 'benefit' from wilderness must also take responsibility for its protection – whether it is writing letters to help protect a vast forest or simply ensuring the small stream in your neighbourhood is still clean. Action is necessary. There is so much for us still to learn. Are 30 hump-back whales across the horizon or 6 grizzly bears along a river bank a reflection of the glory of nature? Or perhaps an indication that times, elsewhere, are tough and this just happens to be where food is still available? We don't know.

Thank you to everyone who joined us this year, and for making our 35th year a success. Despite worldwide uncertainty, it is great to know how much Bluewater's trips are valued. In good times and bad, it is clear that many of you feel such unique, life



Leanne Carey

Kayakers return for dinner to the comfort of the mothership, *Island Odyssey*, with the snowy, Coastal Mountains beyond.

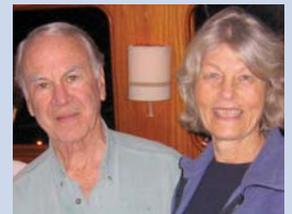
affirming adventures are too important to give up. Thank you for your continuing support.

Finally, let me recognize Bluewater's staff - 'these experiences' wouldn't be possible without the incredible crew who guide them.

*Randy Burke – Owner / Captain*

## 31 Adventures

For many reasons, we are thrilled to be passengers on Bluewater Adventures' first trip to Khutzeymateen Bear Preserve, June 22-28 2010. Our history with



Bluewater makes this trip doubly compelling. Khutzeymateen will be Dick's 20th and Marilyn's 11th trip with Bluewater and every trip has been an unforgettable experience. The many highlights of these trips are more than enough to light up the northern skies... Of course we love sailing with our expert, hardworking and friendly crew and the dining is for gourmets. Our fellow passengers are interesting and fun to be with. We've made many friends throughout the years as a result of our trips. All of this and more add up to a unique experience well worth doing over and over again.

*Dick & Marilyn Wulliger*



Leanne Carey

## Tell a Friend

When you tell a friend about your Bluewater trip you are providing us with the best advertising possible. To demonstrate how appreciative we are of all of our 'Bluewater Ambassadors', we have a special offer. For every person who signs up after hearing about the trip from you, we are going to offer you a 5% discount off your next trip. If six people sign up, you receive a 30% discount. Please ensure when they sign up they mention your name.

## Need More Info?

If you want to find out more details about a particular trip please contact the Bluewater office. Telephone toll-free 1-888-877-1770. Leanne, Erin and Randy are happy to answer your questions. Or contact us via email at [explore@bluewateradventures.ca](mailto:explore@bluewateradventures.ca).

# Changing Tides – 35 Years of Wildlife

Northern Vancouver Island was really where Bluewater began its wildlife love affair with the orcas. 35 years ago we were just learning how to identify individual orcas, how many there were and discovering their close-knit social structure. We worked hard to contribute to the growing knowledge base, hosting researchers and now the orcas are one of the most studied populations in the world. We discovered the joy of watching grizzly bears up the remote fiords in the late 1990's. In the old native villages, we have watched totem poles fall and slowly disappear. But in Alert Bay new totems are being raised, and there continues to be pride in their history and culture.

The Queen Charlotte Islands have been special since our first trips in 1986 with Haida carver, Bill Reid, Murray Newman and the Vancouver Aquarium. In 1987, the environmental battle to protect the southern islands gained national attention. It was an exciting time. In 1993 the islands became the Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve. It is now tightly regulated and we are privileged to be one of the few licensed tour operators. These trips have always been a wonderful combination of old Haida villages and an astounding variety of wildlife. We have certainly seen an increase in humpback whale sightings over the years. This summer, we saw rare, sperm whales in June (and 45 albatross at the same time). Another trip watched transient orcas attack a group of humpback whales.

The appeal of Southeast Alaska was originally the large number of feeding humpback whales, amid spectacular mountain scenery. We were lucky to gain access to bear viewing at the Anan Wildlife



An endangered Black-footed Albatross. Its 7' wingspan carries it thousands of miles over the open ocean.

Bruce Whittington



Bubble-net feeding humpback whales lunge to the surface with gaping open mouths.

Randy Burke



Randy Burke

A female grizzly bear resting contentedly beside the river.

Observatory – where bears grab salmon below the falls, before amazed eyes. With the addition of the US licenced *Snow Goose* in 1996, we were able to offer a greater variety of Alaska itineraries, including some shorter trips. Unfortunately, the glaciers are receding every year, sometimes dramatically, making it difficult to get close. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reports that in 45 years most will be gone. However, sea otters are slowly returning to the inner waters and this summer we enjoyed some great eye level experiences by kayak; in addition to amazing whale and bear experiences.

It wasn't until the addition of *Island Odyssey* in 2003 that Bluewater was able to offer a full schedule of Great Bear Rainforest trips when bear viewing is best in the spring and fall. This fall, we saw Spirit bears and grizzlies on every trip and most trips saw wolves. We even had humpback whales bubble-net feeding – a behaviour normally seen in Alaska. Particularly unusual were three foot long Humboldt squid, typically found off Mexico and last reported on the British Columbia coast in 2004.

*On every trip we continue to explore, discover, and learn.*

## Wildlife - Mola Mola

Ocean sunfish or mola mola are one of the more unique creatures in the ocean. These docile fish can be described as a giant head with



Lindsay Janes

a tail. On average they weigh over 2,000lbs and are sighted "sunbathing" at the surface – thus the name sunfish. They feed primarily on jellyfish, having to eat vast quantities to sustain their size. This also makes them susceptible to choking on floating plastic bags.

# Special 2010 Trips

## Peak Season at the Edge of the World – Early Summer in the Queen Charlottes

Veteran naturalist, Bruce Whittington leads our May 24-June 1 Gwaii Haanas trip to experience the annual explosion of life. From nesting birds to returning humpback whales, nature is blossoming.

## Spring in the Gulf Islands – Yoga & Wellness Retreat

Join gourmet Bluewater chef and yoga instructor, Annie Strucel May 2-6 for our Yoga and Wellness Retreat with massage therapist, Catherine Sutherland. Expect 5 days of beach yoga, massage, healthy eating, and adventure, amid the beautiful, Gulf Islands National Park Reserve.



Haida Watchmen share the history and stories of the totem poles with our group in the Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve

Judy Waytuk

## Island Odyssey visits the North Coast / Khutzeymateen Valley

We are thrilled to finally offer this voyage to Canada's only grizzly bear sanctuary and the islands of Chatham Sound. Bear researcher and educator, Dr. Barrie Gilbert will be our resource guide. June 22-28.

## Coastal Explorer - Join the Adventure

Our Coastal Explorer voyages are some of the most anticipated trips for our staff. They love the opportunity to explore new fiords, and search for bears, whales and sea otters. Share their enthusiasm, May 23-31 traveling from Port Hardy to Bella Bella. This is a great time for birdlife.

## Alaska - Whales, Bears and Glaciers

This trip offers our new shorter, highlight-packed, Alaska itinerary. Discover the amazing whales, bears



A spectacular (and brisk) day, LeConte glacier, Alaska

Leanne Carey

and glaciers of Southeast Alaska. Naturalist, photographer and world traveler, Danny Catt will be our resource guide. July 1-9.

## Orcas, Totems & Grizzlies

Join naturalist, Rob Lott to discover the orcas, bears and native history of Northern Vancouver Island. This is the best place in the world to observe these whales. Rob has spent over 15 summers participating in orca research in the Johnstone Strait area. July 31-Aug 6.

## Great Bear Rainforest - Two Days at the Stands

Our September 28-October 5 voyage will spend 2 days at the bear viewing stands. If you are particularly interested in seeing or photographing a spirit bear this will be your best opportunity.



A black bear catches a wriggling, pink salmon right in front of the group

Bruce Whittington



Island Odyssey is dwarfed by a spectacular waterfall in the Great Bear Rainforest

Bruce Whittington

## Join Us – We're Social

The Bluewater social networking community is growing. We are now active on **Twitter**, **Facebook** and the **Bluewater Blog**.

Become a fan on the Facebook Page "Bluewater Adventures", follow our tweets on [www.twitter.com/Bluewater\\_BC](http://www.twitter.com/Bluewater_BC), or subscribe to our Blog "The Rubber Boot Diaries" at [www.discover-bluewater.blogspot.com](http://www.discover-bluewater.blogspot.com) and receive weekly updates about conservation issues, crew and other Bluewater happenings.

For more information visit our social media page on our website. Stay tuned for the Bluewater YouTube channel!



## Special Offer

Until December 31, you can book a 2010 trip at our "early booking" discounted prices. Call our office 1-888-877-1770 or email us at [explore@bluewateradventures.ca](mailto:explore@bluewateradventures.ca) to confirm details and book your 2010 adventure now.

## Quotes from you...

"It is great to go to a resort, lie on a beach, play and relax, but it only a memory when you get home. This trip was life changing and will make us live the memories forever."

M.M. BC

"The 70 years on this planet I have travelled for and wide – but this has been the most satisfying trip ever for me."

M.S. Ontario

"Every single day had at least one over the top highlight...my very best moment was going to sleep one night when my roommate and I heard a Humpback whale sleeping and breathing outside our porthole."

C.C. BC





## 2009 Quotes from you...

"We did everything the brochure said we would and beyond! So many whales, iceberg sculptures and massive glaciers, bears, sea lions, sea otters while kayaking, fantastic food...could not be improved!"

*C.C. British Columbia*

"It felt as if we were all one family going on an adventure together and all of us sharing in the wonder of the new experience. In a sense there was no separation between crew and client – it was wonderful"

*R.B. New Zealand*

"The meals were absolutely wonderful! Always some unexpected spice or other ingredient to amplify what was already delicious"

*J.M. Alberta*

"The Island Odyssey is a dream to be on and she literally sings under full sail!"

*C.B. Alberta*



Inside the new longhouse in Klemtu talking with a Kitsoo elder. Courtesy of Kitsoo First Nation.

Patrick McCloskey

## Learning Series Travel with an Expert

With some very special resource people onboard, these trips go beyond seeing wildlife and exploring the wilderness. Find a deeper appreciation of what makes this coast so inspiring and fascinating. For detailed information, look online under 2010 Special Trips or contact our office.

- **Great Bear Rainforest** - June 1-8. Join **Doug Neasloss**, Kitsoo bear guide and cultural interpreter & Sierra Club BC leader, **Caitlyn Vernon**. Ancient knowledge and conservation.
- Travel with the **David Suzuki Foundation** - June 2-10 – **Queen Charlotte Islands**. Marine ecologist and educator, **Dr. Scott Wallace** focuses on our need for 'Healthy Oceans'.
- June 27-July 4 - **Queen Charlotte Islands**. **Dr. Robin Wright**, art historian with the Burke Museum / University of Washington returns for an in-depth focus on Haida art and history.
- After two years of planning, we are thrilled **Dr. Nancy Turner** – famed Ethnobotanist, educator, and author of *Plants of Haida Gwaii* – joins us with Haida matriarch **Barb Wilson** - July 4-11, 2010 – **Queen Charlotte Islands**. Gain insights into seldom shared ancient Haida knowledge.

## Notes from the Wheelhouse



Rick Hulbert

Where to begin... When I think of this summer one word really comes to mind – Whales! Of my 10 years on boats in Alaska we saw some of the most spectacular whale displays this summer. Whether it was the transient killer whales taking a stellar sea lion with humpbacks (yes, plural) breaching around them, or the time the humpback repeatedly spied within arm's reach of the skiff. On one occasion we had a group of four humpbacks sleeping all within a few feet of the boat; it's pretty spectacular to see their entire body stretched along the side of the boat just beneath the surface, but it's really spectacular to have one on each side of the boat. We spent literally countless hours quietly floating with whales. The cetaceans of Southeast Alaska managed to blow the minds of all aboard the Snow Goose, including the mind of this Captain.

As usual, we were fortunate to have group after group of fun loving, interesting people who really make this job and all of our trips unique and wonderful experiences.

*Captain Paul Brown*



**BLUEWATER  
ADVENTURES**

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As part of our commitment to the environment and to reduce the use of paper, we are now using email as much as possible, including an email version of this newsletter. If you would prefer to receive "Waterways" by email please let us know. If your email address has changed please inform us. Guests with email also receive extra updates. Bluewater will never sell, share or abuse the private information of our guests.