



# W@T@Rw@Y@S

Bluewater Nature Adventures

FALL 2007

## welcome...

to another issue of Waterways. All of us who work leading the trips want to thank all of you who joined us this season. We have had a wonderful year. Thank you for wanting to travel "off the beaten path" and for caring about wilderness, wildlife and the future of our planet.

Thanks as well to our wonderful partner organizations, all committed to the principles and value of ecotourism, the conservation of wild places, and helping to raise awareness of Bluewater's unique destinations. Some of our partnerships go back over 25 years.

This is my 20th year of leading the company. It is hard to believe I was only 28 years old when I "took over the helm" from Dan Culver. Dan started Bluewater back in the 1970's. My how time flies! I can't imagine any better work. I'm living my dreams and have the opportunity each trip to touch people's hearts and minds. However, I'm starting to like the saying 'I'm not getting older, I'm getting better'... and on that topic I think that Bluewater's "age" – our reputation and combined experience – is one of the reasons people can count on us for quality trips, perhaps even your "trip of a lifetime." If you want to join us in 2008 book early to avoid disappointment.

– Randy Burke

## Bluewater - One of the "World's 50 Best Trips"

In the October issue of *National Geographic Traveler* magazine, Bluewater Adventures' Gwaii Haanas – Queen Charlotte Islands cruise was selected as one of "50 of the Worlds Best Trips". We are honoured and excited to be listed in their 2nd Annual Tours of a Lifetime, beside such exotic travels as Snorkeling Burma, Living Among the Maasai and Mysteries of Ancient



Our Gwaii Haanas – Queen Charlotte Islands cruise is listed in National Geographic's "Tours of a Lifetime"

Egypt. Our trips provide an unparalleled combination of intimate wildlife encounters, learning from coastal native people about their culture and the experience of true wilderness. We are extremely proud of the educational expertise and local knowledge our staff provides after 32 years in operation. We care about our long-term relationships with

our guests, our friends along the coast, the wildlife and the planet.

It is wonderful that these spectacular islands rank beside any destination in the world. National Geographic Traveler first recognized the Queen Charlotte Islands in 2005 when it named our operating area, the 'Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site' the

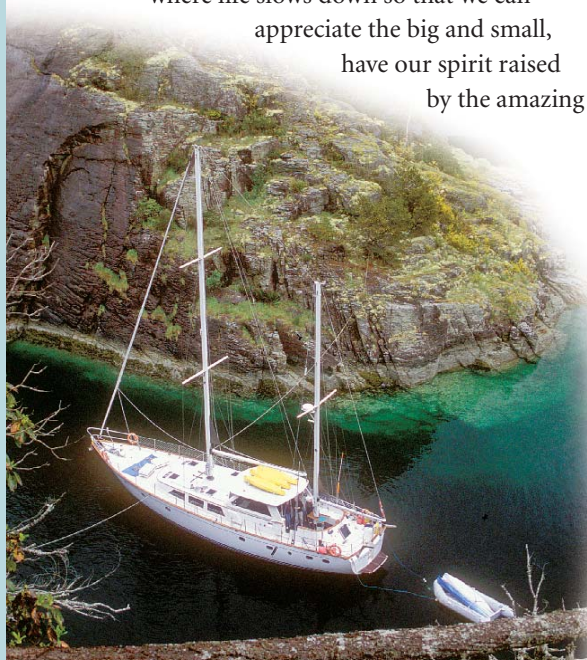
number one national park in North America. Now the magazine has recognized the value of Bluewater's small-group, low-impact ecotours as the best way to experience the area. If you haven't yet enjoyed our Queen Charlotte Islands trips, make your plans now. We thank one of our partners, REI Adventures for recommending us to *National Geographic*.

## Timeless

Bluewater trips have a timeless quality. They bring us back in contact with the natural world – a world where life slows down so that we can appreciate the big and small, have our spirit raised by the amazing

grandeur of landscapes, and be thrilled by wildlife. It is an honour to be able to share an hour (or is it just a few moments) with a bear living its life – the intensity of catching a salmon, just sleeping carefree or tender playfulness with a cub. A dolphin leaps out of the water. A raven cartwheels in the air. That is what these trips are... timeless moments shared with wildlife, with wilderness, with ourselves and loved ones. It reminds us of the importance to make the time for renewal and adventure in our busy lives. The benefits of these trips are not possible in a weekend. Most Bluewater trips are 7-10 days long. These experiences need time so we can slow down and appreciate each day for its diversity of moments. Sharing the passion of a biologist exploring the shoreline at low tide for seastars and anemones (and discovering things you may never have heard

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Island Odyssey anchored in beautiful Desolation Sound. In May the days are long and crowds absent.



## Special Offer

Until December 31, you can book a 2008 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 your 2008 adventure now.

## Save trees, receive the newsletter by email

Bluewater is now sending out our Waterways newsletter both electronically and in the mail. As part of our commitment to be environmentally sensitive and reduce the use of paper, we are trying to use email as much as possible. If you would like to receive Waterways by email please let us know. If you have changed your email address please let us know. Guests with email may also receive extra updates. Bluewater will never sell, share or abuse the private information of our guests.

### Timeless continued

of)...standing in an ancient Native American / First Nations village and finding an exquisitely carved totem pole alone in the forest... floating in a hot springs bath... the laughter and companionship of sharing the journey with like-minded travelers. People often reach an elevated place, where just experiencing the moments matter and what will happen tomorrow doesn't. Time both slows down and speeds up. We come away feeling like we have had a month worth of experiences... and wishing it wasn't over so quickly.

## Our Trips

### Gwaii Haanas - Queen Charlotte Islands

We have just enjoyed our best season ever in these wonderful islands. We started in May when the ecosystem explodes with life. There were thousands of seabirds nesting, long daylight hours, and whales and humans returning – each intent on their own foraging and discoveries. In June we welcomed a group of Haida Elders for a 13-day circumnavigation of the islands and focused on returning Haida names and stories to the landscape. With the calmer waters of mid-summer, we were privileged to have renowned Haida artist and carver, Robert Davidson onboard. Having his wife Teri-Lynn sing, while Robert drummed in the ancient Haida villages was a memorable, moving experience. Our long-term relationships with the Haida Watchmen at the old villages provide our guests with a greater understanding of Haida life. All our trips enjoyed wonderful humpback whale sightings with the largest concentrations earlier in the summer. In August, we once again saw fin whales feeding inshore – a wonderful opportunity to see one of the giant whales. One of our most unusual sightings was the abundance of giant sunfish (*Mola mola*) – a flat fish, 6 feet across that floats around feeding on jellyfish.

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A Haida Watchman explains the totem poles at Ninstints – a UN World Heritage Site.



Humpback whales bubble-net feeding in Alaska.

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A majestic glacier flows into the sea below the Coastal Mountains. What a sight!

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### Southeast Alaska

Southeast Alaska had over 30 feet of snow last winter, and by mid-summer there were still some amazingly snowy panoramas on the mountains... even a few patches still down by the ocean. The bear viewing at the US Forest Service Anan Creek Observatory was incredible. Most people will never get the chance to get closer than this to bears. The animals are completely fixated on feeding on salmon, and their bear to bear interactions, that they in effect ignore the presence of humans. This leads to wonderful photographic opportunities in one of the most beautiful places.

Floating before a majestic glacier with icebergs all around the boat is completely invigorating – both the overwhelming drama unfolding before you, and the chilling wind off the ice. Watching giant chunks of ice fall into the sea is a very relevant subject right now with global warming, and the experience brings it home.

We enjoyed finding humpback whales throughout the area, and groups of whales "bubble-net feeding" on many trips. At the end of July, orca researcher, Volker



Getting up close to the ice in our kayaks and zodiacs

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Deecke was our onboard naturalist and happily transient orcas showed up several times. Sea otters continue to expand their range and we are getting better and better looks at these cute creatures.

## Great Bear Rainforest

In June we enjoyed some wonderful grizzly bear viewing as the bears 'mowed' and munched through the estuary plants after a long winters hibernation. Orcas were frequently sighted and the long days allowed us to explore some 'off the beaten path' places. In September, every one of our trips had great encounters



Seeing a Spirit Bear is an amazing experience.

with Spirit bears. Seeing this rare, all-white bear is truly an uplifting and remarkable experience. In addition, we enjoyed amazing grizzly sightings as the bears concentrated to feed on the returning salmon. The weather was mixed – it is a rainforest after all - but our wonderful onboard naturalists kept guests informed and learning about the conservation issues that have made this area known around the world. Native guides shared wonderful tours of the bighouse in Klemtu and for the first time, we were able to visit an old First Nations meeting house on the remote west coast.

## Northern Vancouver Island

Johnstone Strait and the many protected channels of northern Vancouver Island lived up to its reputation with some wonderful orca (killer whale) sightings. We enjoyed an unusual number of transient orcas, in addition to the usual resident orca pods found here in the late summer. Transient orcas feed on other marine mammals (seals, porpoise, etc.) while resident orcas focus extensively on salmon. This area has a spectacular range of different marine mammals and this summer we enjoyed following 500 Pacific White-sided dolphins, numerous encounters with Dalls porpoise and increasing numbers of humpback whales.

The opportunity on some of our trips (Orcas, Totems and Grizzlies) to head up Knight Inlet to view grizzly bears is an added bonus to the area. In August the bears are around the estuaries as the salmon school and start heading upstream, and then in September our bear viewing shifts up to the spawning channels (and the viewing platforms) where the bears are then feeding. Special experiences in the Broughton Archipelago included visiting old-timer, Billy Proctor and whale researcher, Alexandra Morton. In one of the new protected areas announced last year we saw a wolf.

# 2008 Special Voyages

## Princess Louisa Inlet & Desolation Sound

Next May we are returning by popular demand back to lovely Princess Louisa Inlet, Chatterbox Falls and the islands of Desolation Sound. The dates are **May 12-18** (Vancouver to Campbell River).

## Inside Passage – Coastal Explorers

People are clearly enjoying our Spring and Fall trips along the coast. These trips combine the highlights of Vancouver Island and the southern Great Bear Rainforest into one trip. One of our returning guests called it their best trip yet. Next summer there are two dates to choose from - **May 19-27** or **October 6-15**.

*Special Offer* – Combine Desolation Sound with the Inside Passage trip to see the coast as few will ever enjoy it and we will offer you 20% off the second trip.

## Queen Charlotte Islands

Join author, birder, naturalist and award winning photographer Bruce Whittington to see the Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve at the height of the bird nesting season (**May 16-24**). We will visit bird researchers and get the rare opportunity to access nesting islands when chicks are leaving the nests. Expect lots of whales, and of course a visit to the World Heritage Site, the old Haida village of Ninintits.

*Comment:* Some people, not used to westcoast weather, might imagine May as somehow too early. Statistically there is just as much sunshine as any other month of the summer. Trees are blooming in Vancouver in March and Bluewater will already have been operating trips for two months at that point.

Curator of Native American Art at the Burke Museum & University of Washington, Dr. Robin Wright joins us again **August 10-18** for an in-depth focus on Haida art.

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Photo: Whittington

Tufted puffins – one of the more colourful seabirds.



Examining native petroglyphs in the Great Bear Rainforest with permission from local First Nations.

## 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.

## Quotes From You

"The crew could not have been more helpful, friendly, hardworking and knowledgeable."

*J. M. United Kingdom*

"What a fantastic combination! The Island Roamer & Haida Gwaii. It's been a "wonder"ful trip full of culture, history and the natural world."

*D. & S. F. – British Columbia*

"A great team, a magical place and scrumptious meals. It has been one of the most fun and educational trips for us. Thanks for being so helpful and caring – you've made this an incredible experience."

*T. & G.G. – California*





## Quotes From You

"On a 10-point scale, we would rate the trip a 15! To us, this trip was off the charts! We've participated in many eco-tourism trips and this surpassed all. The combination of creating an intimate experience where we felt connected with the land, water, wildlife, native people, crew and passengers is unique. Also the depth & breadth of knowledge about the ecosystems and conservation issues was superb."

J. & L.H. – California

"I expected to learn about the Haida – I did. I hoped to see whales – I did, humpback and Orcas for extended periods! I did not expect to feel so overwhelmed with emotion. The spirituality of this sacred place changed me."

A.T. – Ontario



**BLUEWATER ADVENTURES**

### Southeast Alaska

We are pleased to introduce a new 9-day Alaska trip next summer aboard Island Odyssey. The new itinerary will provide more time for wildlife, shore excursions and include the LeConte glacier, where we head into the ice in a local jet boat designed for the purpose, **July 12-20** and **July 21-29**. We are still offering our 11-day voyages that include spectacular Tracy Arm and the Sawyer glaciers **June 19-29** and **June 30-July 10**. These trips provide 'spectacular Alaska' – from the mountains to the sea, from whales to salmon and bears.

**June 19-29** travel with biologist and bear guide, Tim Irvin as we focus on the 'Bears of Southeast Alaska'. Tim joined us in the Great Bear Rainforest this Fall and received rave reviews. He has extensive experience with brown bears (grizzly) and is presently working with the BC Ministry of Environment on wildlife policy. The trip will have the special opportunity to visit Pack Creek, run by the Forest Service on Admiralty Island National Monument – the area with the highest concentration of brown bears in North America.

### Great Bear Rainforest

We will have a special opportunity **June 2-9** to visit the old village at Kitkiata. Accompanied by a native guide, we will see one of the finest collections of petroglyphs on the coast. Petroglyphs are native rock carvings, hundreds of years old. And of course, we expect wonderful bear and whale sightings, and if past years are an indicator, great weather.

Join Dr. Barrie Gilbert, bear researcher and retired professor from Utah State University as he returns again to lead our Great Bear Rainforest trips (**September 14-21** and **September 22-29**).

*Look for more special trips in future e-newsletters and the spring newsletter.*



Exploring by kayak brings an added dimension to the trip.

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Zodiacs are used to transfer guests to and from shore.

## Conservation News

### New Protected Areas and Trophy Hunting

It is a great concern that in some of the new protected areas in the Great Bear Rainforest, we can be watching bears one day, and the next, bear hunters can come and kill the same animals. The British Columbia government allows hunting in provincial parks.

While the all-white Spirit bear is supposedly "protected", a black bear which carries the all important recessive gene (and thus likely to parent white cubs) is not. Grizzly bears, threatened along the whole coast, can end up as a rug on someone's floor. It is one thing to kill an animal for food and completely different to trophy hunt (to satisfy one's ego). In some areas, conservationists and concerned citizens are buying up the bear hunting licenses (or "tags") as only so many are available each year, and thus preventing hunting from happening. To voice your concerns contact:

Premier Gordon Campbell:  
[Gordon.Campbell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Gordon.Campbell.MLA@leg.bc.ca)



## Send In Your Photos

We would love to see your Bluewater trip photos and perhaps use them for our website. Please email them to [explore@bluewateradventures.ca](mailto:explore@bluewateradventures.ca) or mail them to our office address.

## Need More Information?

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