



WATERWAYS

Natural History Coastal Adventures

FALL 2010

Good People Make The Difference

Another year winds down... The boats have just returned to the dock for the season. We have enjoyed a wonderful year with incredible summer weather, unbelievable wildlife sightings and special people from around the world. To all of you who joined us to adventure along this incredible coastline, I say thank you. I so appreciate your enthusiasm, joy, love of learning and love of nature. To the crew of Island Roamer, Island Odyssey and Snow Goose I can only tip my hat. I know they are the most special people – sharing their passion and knowledge of wildlife, and caring for all who come aboard. They make the difference between a good trip and a great one.

Early bookings for 2011 are coming in. We are already getting excited as plans progress. Please make sure you plan ahead (and not delay) to ensure you get on the trip you want. We are looking forward to sharing the protected waters, whales, ancient totem poles, birdlife, mountains and bears of British Columbia and Southeast Alaska with you!

– Randy Burke, Owner / Captain

To Haida Gwaii in May

One quarter of British Columbia's seabirds nest in Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands). There are seabird colonies of over 100,000 birds. Each May there is an explosion of life as pelagic seabirds return from the ocean to nest. You will see auklets, guillemots, puffins, eagles, falcons, albatross and ancient murrelets, among the list of sightings. Next May you will have the special opportunity of meeting researchers studying the tiny ancient murrelets.

Only two days out of the egg, ancient murrelet chicks head to sea – like fluffy wind up toys. It is a wildlife moment to remember, tiny chicks bouncing out of the forest on a moonlit night. Long hours



Heading out to sea, fluffy Ancient Murrelet chicks are weighed and banded by conservation researchers

Laskeek Bay Conservation Society

Tufted Puffins are one of the more colourful sea birds that return to Haida Gwaii each summer



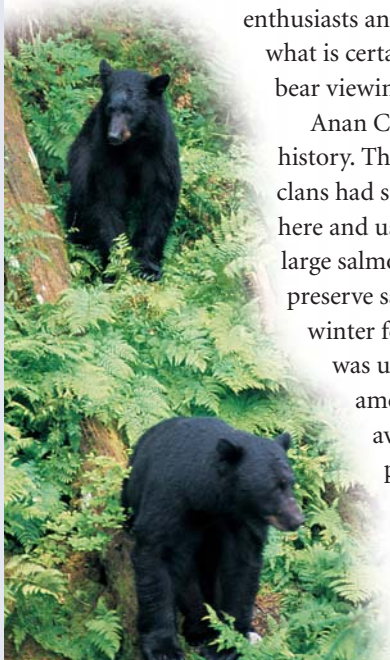
Lindsay Janes

of sunlight create plankton blooms at the base of the food chain in the ocean. This makes a rich feeding ground for hundreds of humpback whales returning from Hawaii. You can expect to see feeding whales through out the trip. Of course, it is the almost total lack of others in the Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve that creates the peace and solitude of a true wilderness experience at this time of year. It is worthy of contemplation...

Join ornithologist, long-time Canadian Wildlife Service scientist and Bluewater naturalist, Dr. Rob Butler, May 23-31, 2011. \$4465, plus tax. Visit www.bluewateradventures.ca for more information.

Alaska's Anan Creek

Every summer an estimated 300,000 salmon swim up Anan creek to spawn – the largest pink salmon run in Southeast Alaska! This abundance of fish attracts black and brown bears, bald eagles, and now wildlife enthusiasts and photographers to what is certainly one of the best bear viewing sites in Alaska.



Anan Creek has a rich history. The Stikine Tlingit clans had summer fish camps here and used Anan Creek's large salmon run to catch and preserve salmon for their winter food supply. Anan was unique – the large amount of salmon available made it possible to have several clans sharing one fish camp. In 1901,



The US Forest Service Anan Creek Wildlife Observatory and lower viewing blind at the falls

Pilot Fish Packing Company set up a large fish trap at Anan, that allowed few fish to make it up the creek to spawn. It was very destructive to the Anan salmon population and commercial fish traps were outlawed shortly after Alaska became a state in 1959.

The US Forest Service built a wildlife observatory 30 feet above the lower falls in the 1970's. As knowledge of the site increased, the Forest Service

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Tell a Friend

Telling friends about your Bluewater trip is the best acknowledgement possible. To demonstrate our appreciation for all of our 'Bluewater Ambassadors' we have a special offer. For every person who signs up after hearing about your trip, we are going to offer you a 5% discount off your next voyage. 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. Erin, Lindsay and Randy are happy to answer your questions. Or contact us via email at explore@bluewateradventures.ca

Alaska's Anan Creek continued

hired bear researcher, Dr. Barrie Gilbert from Utah State University (and a Bluewater Adventures naturalist) to determine how many bears were using the area and what kind of management was required. He determined that up to 30 black bears and 10 brown bears regularly used the area. From his research at Katmai and Knight Inlet, he knew the importance of ensuring human behaviour was consistent to make bears comfortable, and leaving prime feeding areas protected for bears only. As research continued it was amazing to discover that well-managed bear viewing actually helps the bear population. Mothers with cubs seek the protection of the viewing stands – often leaving a cub safe up a tree while fishing. Males, who will attack cubs, given the opportunity, usually stay away and feed upstream. The long term studies show the bear population is growing because a greater number of cubs are surviving.



Patrick McCloskey



A 'National Geographic' moment – brown bears (grizzlies) feasting on the plentiful number of salmon returning to Anan Creek to spawn

Today, Anan Creek is tightly managed by on-site Forest Service rangers. Advance reservations are required (and difficult to obtain), with a maximum of 60 visitors allowed daily. Bluewater Adventures is lucky to be one of the few tour operators permitted to visit. A visit to Anan Creek is certainly one of the highlights of our **Southeast Alaska** voyages. And it sure is a joy to watch all those bear cubs!

Haida Gwaii - it's now official

Haida Gwaii is now the official name for what have been called the Queen Charlotte Islands. This wonderful archipelago, located 60 miles off the British Columbia coast, has carried the name of a British queen since 1792. Now the islands are going back to the name the Haida First Nation have always called them, Haida Gwaii – meaning "Islands of the People". This may be going back to correct a historical wrong, but it is certainly going forward for the Haida. This milestone is part of a sweeping change bringing increased self-governance and decision-making over land use. There is a tangible sense of pride among the Haida. They are finally being recognized as the original inhabitants of the islands. And their long term vision for the Islands is certainly one of stewardship. The long dreamed-of protection for Duu Guuds, the



Les Colemean

Haida carver, Norman White showing guests his latest totem pole

northwest part of Graham Island, has happened. The amount of forest logged each year has dropped significantly and the Haida have taken a public stand against offshore oil drilling around the Islands. In seeking to become self-reliant in energy, the Haida are supporting the development of the largest wind farm project in British Columbia.

Bluewater Adventures is privileged to be able to offer

trips to the gem of Haida Gwaii, the Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site. Beyond the wonderful wildlife and wilderness, it is the spirit of the Haida that shines and gives the experience of visiting these islands both inspiration and heart. When we visit the ancient Haida villages and their amazing totem poles, we also meet the Haida Watchmen. It is a wonderful opportunity to listen to their history, their perspectives, the changes underway and the challenges that still lie ahead.

For being such a small part of a large country, Haida Gwaii's recognition is well out of proportion. Countless books continue to be published about the Haida, their incredible art, and the Islands. Canadian money is imprinted with Haida art, sculptural icons like Bill Reid's mythological Haida canoe stand in Washington, DC and at the center of the Vancouver International Airport. Magazines like National Geographic have repeatedly run articles on the Islands. **Find out** why for yourself!



Lindsay Janes

The new, \$26 million Haida Heritage Centre, where the Haida share their stories and art with visitors

Transient Orca Sightings

Otherwise known as the North Pacific Transient killer whale, Transient orca are the marine mammal hunters of the world's oceans. They will hunt and eat any other marine mammal – from whales to dolphins and seals – if they can catch them. Though they look the same as the Resident orca (salmon hunters) and the elusive Offshore orca (probably shark hunters), research recently showed that Transients separated genetically from other orca around 700,000 years ago and they're now recognized as a distinct species. In addition to a difference in their food choices, Transient orca also



Lindsay Janes

Transient orcas surround a giant elephant seal (foreground) before attacking under the water.

differ in their social structure, hunting range and subtle physical anomalies.

2010 was a great season for spotting Transients.

We enjoyed spectacular encounters in every region.

In **Haida Gwaii** we crossed paths with two different pods. One trip watched two whales circle a group of nervous seals hauled out on a rock island. Another trip had the fortunate experience of having a pod swim right into the small cove where the boat was anchored!

Mesmerized by a close-up view of a humpback whale



Lindsay Janes

Guests in **Southeast Alaska** were busy watching humpback whales bubble-net feeding only to be interrupted by a pod of Transients chasing a Steller sea lion towards the boat! The Transients were successful in their catch and our guests had a rare "National Geographic" moment that only a handful of people ever have the privilege to encounter.

In the **Great Bear Rainforest**, we watched for hours as Transients slowly tired out and eventually drowned an elephant seal. Male elephant seals can be more than 1500kg in weight and are known to be vicious fighters. Though the orcas prevailed in the end, it would be a discredit to the seal to not mention the incredible fight he put up!

Off **Northern Vancouver Island**, guests were watching a pod of Transients when suddenly more than 100 Pacific white-sided dolphins appeared, herding fish in front of them. The dolphins swam within 200m of where the transients were last seen. One orca briefly gave chase, but the dolphins made a speedy exit and the transients continued on in the opposite direction.

Khutzeymateen Valley

- The Khutzeymateen Valley is located 40 kilometers northeast of Prince Rupert and just south of the Alaskan border
- Khutzeymateen is pronounced "Koo-tz-eh-ma-teen"
- Khutzeymateen is a Tshimshian word meaning "a confined space for salmon and bears".
- At the head of the inlet, the Khutzeymateen/K'tzim-a-Deen Grizzly Sanctuary is BC's only protected area for grizzly bears, established in 1992.



Sherry Kirkvold

With the addition of the Khutzeymateen Conservation Area in 2006, the protected area now includes the entire inlet.

- Like many coastal glacial valleys, the inlet is towered by steep cliffs, covered in old growth rainforests of spruce, cedar and hemlock.
- The watershed is home to an estimated 50 grizzly bears ranging from the high alpine meadows to the shores of the inlet.
- Black bears, wolves, wolverine, mountain goat, porcupine, beaver, along with over 100 species of birds can be found in the valley.

A grizzly mother and her cub-of-the-year cross an estuary in search of food. Island Roamer is anchored in the background.



Mike Leary

Grizzly mother with 3 cubs – a rare sight!"

- Nearby waters are home to otters, seals, humpbacks and orca.
- Bluewater Adventures is operating 4 and 7-day tours to the **Khutzeymateen Inlet**. June is an excellent time to visit as grizzly bears are feeding in the shoreline sedges.

Barry Komar

Special Offer

Until December 15, you can book a 2011 trip at our 2010 prices. Call our office 1-888-877-1770 or email us at explore@bluewateradventures.ca to confirm details and book your 2011 adventure now.

Quotes from you...

"I don't think the full impact of my experience will fully sink in for some time – this level of nature is profoundly moving and a privilege"

S.M. – London, UK

"This week in the Khutzeymateen was out of this world, always exciting and deeply mysterious and wonderful."

M.M. – California

"Many, many thanks for an absolutely marvelous adventure. Far exceeded expectations and will remain in memory forever"

P.T. and B.W. – British Columbia

"Lovely vessel, in great condition – perfect for the trip we were looking for"

S.T. – London, UK





Daenna Van-Mulligan



Dan Liden

The Dawes glacier makes a great backdrop for a group photo aboard Snow Goose in Alaska

2010 Quotes from you

"Another stupendous voyage with Bluewater and all the lively, proficient crew!"

J.R. and M.R. – Virginia

"From the largest humpback to the tiniest plant and everything in between, this has been a fantastic adventure!"

M.R. – British Columbia

"Travel does not get better than this – up close and personal with nature – in our own backyard. Wake up Canada and see what we have!"

S.B and J.B – Ontario

"We thoroughly enjoyed our trip – the weather, the Island Roamer, the opportunity to see the totems and villages, the wildlife and the landscape, the company and especially the competent and caring crew – truly a week to treasure".

B.C. and L.C. – Saskatchewan



Lindsay James

A group of six humpback whales lunge to the surface after bubble-net feeding in the quiet waters of Frederick Sound, Alaska. Underwater, one whale emits bubbles to encircle a school of fish. Then, with a piercing whistle, they all lunge open-mouthed after the fish, bursting from the surface. This feeding technique is one of the most spectacular behaviours we see, and some people come across the world hoping to observe it.

Bluewater on YouTube

It's rare to come away with poor photos from a Bluewater trip. But even the best photograph can't quite portray the motion of a twisting humpback breaching (and the subsequent deafening crash), the sound of sea lions growling, or the splashing of a salmon as it barely escapes a bear's mouth. This is where video shines. Bluewater Adventures has created our own YouTube channel www.youtube.com/user/BluewaterAdventures. We are steadily increasing the number of videos online and invite you to watch some of the amazing moments captured by both professionals and passengers onboard... from spirit bears fishing, to oyster catchers calling and crew dancing. Let us know what you think!

Of course, these videos are only a few minutes out of our 5-9 day adventures. The real 'footage' awaits you aboard... Do you have video footage from your trip? Please contact Lindsay at: explore@bluewateradventures.ca

Out The Porthole

It's Thanksgiving and I'm full of gratitude for yet another fabulous season with Bluewater. It is such a pleasure to work with a group of people who are authentic and work with such integrity. I can sincerely tell you that the Bluewater staff honestly want you, the guest, to have the best experience possible. In addition, I met such great guests this summer. Those of you facing new experiences and trying new things, even though it may be outside of your comfort zone – like kayaking – and then discovering how wonderful it actually is (and you can hardly wait to do it again). I'm grateful to be part of your fun.



Kitty Lloyd

It feels like I'm hard at work cooking, but for 16 close friends. You inspire me to get back in the kitchen and make something dripping with chocolate. When I have a coffee break I like to go to the bow and dangle my feet from the bowsprit, watching the world float by. Each year I think "That was the best wildlife ever!" and then the next year produces more.

Thank you all so much for a wonderful season. Happy fall – enjoy the leaves!

Chef Debra Fontaine

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We are active on **Twitter**, **Facebook** and the **Bluewater Blog**. For more information visit our social media page on our website.



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