

BC Parks iNaturalist Project

Observation Calendar

Become a citizen scientist by taking photographic observations of plants, animals and other species every time you're in a B.C. provincial park or protected area. This will help scientists and researchers track biodiversity over time and help inform management plans that will help protect and enhance these areas.

Use this calendar to guide your observations by finding out when the best time is to see certain species and discover other important biodiversity days.



JAN

- Pacific chorus frogs can be heard calling year-round in southwest B.C. but you'll likely start to see them more come spring.
- Anna's hummingbirds, found on the southwest coast year-round, are especially active as they start to build their nests.

FEB

- 16 - World Whale Day
- Pacific herring start to spawn on shorelines along the coast, often in large events that attract countless seabirds, sea lions and humpback whales.
- Grey whales can be found migrating along B.C.'s coast.

MAR

- 7 - Beaver Day
- 20 - World Sparrow Day
- 21 - International Day of Forests
- Wildflowers start to bloom in southwest B.C.
- Brant geese arrive in large numbers along B.C.'s coast.

APR

- 22 - Earth Day
- 30 - World Amphibian Day
- April and May are often peak wildflower months in southwest B.C.
- Shorebirds migrate along the B.C. coast through April and May.

MAY

- 17 - Endangered Species Day
- 22 - World Biodiversity Day
- Painted turtles have emerged from hibernation. Look for them in the shallows of wetland habitats like lakes, ponds and slow streams.
- Northwestern salamanders can be seen during the breeding season in spring and early summer.

JUNE

- 8 - World Oceans Day
- June-August is the best time to spot dragonflies and damselflies.
- June and July is peak wildflower time on the north coast of B.C.



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JUL

- 14 - Shark Awareness Day
- 16 - World Snake Day
- 20 - Parks Day
- Wildflowers are in bloom in more alpine environments in July and August.
- Snakes, like the common garter snake, are active in spring and summer.

AUG

- Look for butterflies in more alpine environments in July and August.
- July and August are great times to examine seaweed species diversity in tidepools and along shorelines in coastal parks.

SEPT

- Spawning salmon start to return to rivers. Some start in August or even earlier, some start later and continue to December.
- Raptors such as turkey vultures, osprey, falcons, and hawks often gather in large numbers (such as on southern Vancouver Island) as they start to head south for winter.

OCT

- 21 - Reptile Awareness Day
- 29 - Sea Slug Day
- Keep an eye out for migratory birds heading south, especially in the Columbia Wetlands where more than 250 species pass through during the fall migration.

NOV

- Watch for large gatherings of predatory birds like bald eagles near rivers and streams, as they take advantage of the spawning salmon. Some locations even have eagle festivals, including the Fraser Valley Bald Eagle Festival!

DEC

- This is the time to see birds that winter in B.C. or are present year-round, such as harlequin ducks and great blue herons.
- Moose, elk, and caribou are active in northern parks throughout winter and may be easier to spot against the snow.

