

Comox Valley Nature Calendar

Spring: March, April, May

Early Spring

Herring spawn in Baynes Sound attracts large rafts of gulls, water birds & sea lions
Pink & Chum Salmon fry emerge from spawning gravels
Earliest Black Bears begin to come out of shallow hibernation
Earliest wildflowers bloom: gold star, blue-eyed Mary
Brant Geese begin to arrive
Heron begin nesting, Bald Eagles lay eggs
Rufous Hummingbirds, Violet-green Swallows, Tree Swallows arrive
Salmonberry, trilliums, red-flowering currant bloom
Salamanders migrate with first warm rain
Tree frog chorus begins

Mid Spring

Trumpeter Swans gone from Valley
Turkey Vultures & first warblers such as Yellow-rumped Warblers arrive
Brant Geese numbers peak; shorebirds arrive
Coho fry & trout parr head out to sea
Stinging nettle ready for picking; cottonwoods scent the air
Bigleaf maple, pink & white fawn lilies, yellow violet, wild ginger, bleeding heart, seablush, larkspur bloom
Heron & Bald Eagle eggs hatch
Sea Lion migration

Late Spring

Yellow Warblers arrive, migrating shorebirds depart, Brant Geese gone
Swainson's Thrushes singing
Dogwood, fairyslipper, camas, lupins bloom
Vancouver Island Marmots come out of hibernation

Summer: June, July, August

Early Summer

Fawn season
Nighthawks arrive
Summer-run Chinook enter the Puntledge River
Parasitic plants such as pinesap, candystick, gnome plant, coralroot emerge
Pyrolas & wintergreens bloom
Salmonberries ripen; oceanspray blooms
Lowest daytime tides for viewing of tidepool marine life

Mid Summer

Early flowers in Paradise Meadows, such as globeflower, marsh marigold, shooting star, bog-laurel bloom
Harbour Seal pups may be seen on beaches

Late Summer

Bald Eagles fledged
Vancouver Island Ptarmigan can be found in Strathcona Park mountains
Crickets chirping
Blackberries, huckleberries ripen
Pink Salmon runs begin
Young Western Toads migrate from wetlands

Autumn: September, October, November

Early Autumn

Early-run Chinook enter Puntledge River; Pink Salmon runs end
Bears, gulls & eagles feasting on salmon carcasses
Sandhill Cranes migrate south over the Valley
Red Squirrels gather cone seeds for the winter
Chanterelle mushrooms emerge after first autumn rain
Subalpine blueberries ripen
Swallowtail butterfly spins chrysalis for the winter
Quantities of seaweeds found on beaches

Mid Autumn

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Vancouver Island Marmots go into hibernation
Sea Lions return
Fall Chinook runs end; Coho & Chum Salmon runs begin
Turkey Vultures depart; Trumpeter Swans return for the winter
Snow falls at subalpine elevations

Late Autumn

Chum salmon runs end; aroma of dying fish along the rivers
Winter storm season begins with high winds & waves

Winter: December, January, February

Early Winter

Coho Salmon runs end
Black Bears enter shallow hibernation
Christmas Bird Counts take place

Mid Winter

Over-wintering waterfowl seen throughout the Comox Valley & Baynes Sound
Juncos, finches, chickadees, sparrows, siskins visit backyard feeders
Bald Eagles begin courtship & nest building
Best harvest time for shellfish
Highest tides in winter

Late Winter

Trumpeter Swans commonly seen throughout the Valley
Varied Thrushes, Red-winged Blackbirds singing; owls begin calling
Hazelnut catkins, pussy willows, skunk cabbage bloom
Winter storm season ends