

# 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  
Hérons 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

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## 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

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

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Hazelnut catkins, pussy willows, skunk cabbage bloom  
Winter storm season ends

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