Skagway: There’s Wildlife in Them’ Thar’ Hills

Venture out on one of Skagway’s hiking trails, looking and listening for signs of wildlife. Rent a car and head for Dyna, watching for bears, eagles and marine mammals along the way. Scan the ridges above the Klondike Highway for mountain goats. Bring your tent and sleeping bag and hike the famous Chilkoot Trail. Skagway is a good jumping-off point for many wildlife viewing experiences.

Skagway was also a jumping-off point for the Klondike Gold Rush of 1898, and once boasted a population of over 20,000. Most headed for Canada’s Klondike region, convinced there was “gold in them thar’ hills.” Some struck it rich. Most went home disappointed. Spend a few days in Skagway and you’ll come to realize that, while you may not find any gold, there is definitely wildlife in them’ thar’ hills.

For information on tours and lodging, consult the Skagway Convention and Visitors Bureau. Visit www.skagway.com or call 907-983-2854. In Skagway, stop by the visitor center downtown at Second Avenue and Broadway.

STAY SAFE!

When you see wildlife, take your time, stay calm and do not feed wild animals. Doing so can cause them to associate people with food, which can cause trouble. Human food can also make them sick.

Watchable Wildlife “Fun Facts”

- Dawn and dusk are when many wildlife species are most active. Midday warmth energizes dragonflies and butterflies and creates thermals for eagles and hawks. Low tides expose tidepools and a wealth of food for birds and mammals.
- Never run from a bear. Stand your ground! If the bear strikes or bites you, lie on your front, protect your face and neck and remain still. In rare instances, bears may be predatory. Fight back if the bear does not notice you. If it does notice you, face the bear, wave your arms and shout loudly.
- STAY SAFE! For safety, take a guided tour or take a hike with you or in bear-proof storage.
- Be alert along noisy streams, in thick brush, and when visibility is poor. Reduce your chances of surprising a bear. Be alert along noisy streams, in thick brush, and when visibility is poor.
- Keep a Low Profile. Noticing and reading these clues adds richness to wildlife viewing. Tracking books and workshops will help you.
- Be Considerate of Others. Always give bears space and never approach closer than 100 yards. If a bear is on your property and giving you little or no warning, you must protect yourself. Always take your dog with you or leave your property and return later.
- Help Keep Wildlife Wild. People use and enjoy the full range of habitats, from subalpine, pine forest to tundra at higher elevations. Some trails begin right in town, while others are only accessible by foot or by trail. Denver and Laughton Glacier trails are reached via white pass. The trailhead is marked with a sign and trail map. Be sure to bring your own water and food. Be aware of your surroundings. Always carry a first aid kit and a means of communication. Visit Alaska State Parks’ Staying Safe web page for details: www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/safety.
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Wildlife Viewing Guide

Alaska Coastal Wildlife Viewing Trail

From the bears of Hyder to the bald eagles of Haines, the whales of Frederick Sound to the birds of the Stikine River, the Inside Passage segment of the Alaska Coastal Wildlife Viewing Trail highlights over 70 wildlife viewing sites in and near the communities of Gustavus, Haines, Juneau, Ketchikan, Petersburg, Port Angeles, Wales Island, Sitka, Skagway and Wrangell.

For more information about the Alaska Coastal Wildlife Viewing Trail, or to browse through wildlife viewing sites in other communities, visit wildlifeviewing.alaska.gov

End Play a game and check our packs.

See your local圖 ask your local shop.

A Alaska State Parks and Wildlife Service Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program All public partners are equal opportunity providers and employers.
in Them Thar' Hills

Skagway: There's Wildlife

...find any gold, there is definitely wildlife in them thar' hills. Skagway and you'll come to realize that, while you may not get rich. Most went home disappointed. Spend a few days in Skagway and venture out on one of Skagway's hiking trails, looking and listening for signs of wildlife. Rent a car and head for Dyea, the famous Chilkoot Trail. Skagway is a good jumping-off point for many wildlife viewing experiences. Scan the ridges above the Klondike Highway for the mountains, trails, islands and waterways of Alaska's wildlife in a variety of ways. Respect private property and give hunters, anglers and others plenty of space.

STAY SAFE!

The mountains, trails, islands and waterways of the Alaska Coastal Wildlife Viewing Trail are wild lands. For safety, take a guided tour or take a companion, let someone know your plans and be prepared for emergencies with spare clothes, first aid kit and a means of communication. Visit the Alaska State Parks' Staying Safe web page for details: www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/safety.

O Canada: Skagway is one of only three Southeast Alaska communities connected via road to Canada (Haines and Hyder are the others). The U.S. - Canada border is 15 miles from downtown, allowing for an easy day trip into Canada. Look for mountain goats, bears, moose, rock ptarmigan, owls, golden eagles, and other wildlife along the road on both sides of the border. Wolves, lynx and caribou might be seen in the boreal forests after crossing into Canada. Good wildlife viewing spots in Canada that can be reached on a day trip from Skagway include the lookout over Windy Arm (50 miles from town, near the “Welcome to the Yukon” sign) and the area around Carcross (61 miles from downtown).

Long Bay is a great spot to look for harbor porpoises, harbor seals and a variety of sea birds.

Traveling Safely in Bear Country (All of Skagway is bear country)

Making noise (sing, clap, talk) while you travel will reduce your chances of surprising a bear. Be alert along noisy streams, in thick brush, and when visibility is poor. Always keep your belongings (backpack, food, fish, etc.) with you or in bear-proof storage.

Never feed wild animals. Doing so can cause them to associate people with food, which can cause trouble. Human food can also make them sick.

Never run from a bear. If a bear strikes or bites you, lie on your front, protect your face and neck and remain still. If the bear does not notice you, quickly leave, keeping your eyes on the bear. If it does notice you, face the bear, wave your arms and talk to it calmly. If it approaches you, stand your ground.

Keep a Low Profile. Enjoy watching animals’ natural behaviors. Resist the temptation to try to attract their attention with sounds. If your presence is causing an animal to stop feeding or act restless, give it more space.

Time it Right. Dawn and dusk are when many wildlife species are most active. Midday warmth energizes dragonflies and butterflies and creates thermals for eagles and hawks. Low tides expose tidepools and a wealth of food for birds and mammals.

Look for Clues. Tracks, droppings, trails and twigs tell stories of wildlife in the area - what they are eating, where they live and when they passed through. Noticing and reading these clues adds richness to wildlife viewing. Tracking books and workshops will help you.

Help Keep Wildlife Wild. Never feed wild animals. Doing so can cause them to associate people with food, which can cause trouble. Human food can also make them sick.

Be Considerate of Others. People use and enjoy Alaska's wildlife in a variety of ways. Respect private property and give hunters, anglers and others plenty of space.

Find more information on bear country and bear safety at www.wildlifeviewing.alaska.gov.
**Wildlife Viewing Sites**

1. **Downtown Skagway**
   - Chinook (king) and Pink salmon spawn in Pullen Creek and Pond in July and August. Look and listen for American dippers along the creek year-round. Follow Second Avenue east to reach the creek and pond. The Broadway Dock sits at the mouth of Pullen Creek and is a good place to see salmon pooling before they venture up the creek to spawn. Look for harbor seals, river otters, mink, marbled murrelets and pigeon guillemots from the ferry dock or the small boat harbor, found along Congress Way at the southeast corner of town. Walk the shoreline from the harbor back toward town for additional viewing chances.

2. **Dewey Lakes Trail System**
   - is a network of trails found on the doorstep of town. The Lower Dewey Lake Trail loops 2.5 miles through pine forest around Lower Dewey Lake. Most of the other trails branch off of this trail. The Upper Lake Trail starts at the north end of the loop and climbs 3,000 feet in 3 miles (one way) to Upper Dewey Lake. As the trail ascends, forest gives way to alpine — good habitat for grouse and ptarmigan. Look for chucks accompanying brood in May and June. Mammals and bird species throughout the summer. Use binoculars to search for mountain goats on the surrounding ridgelines. The Sturzling’s Landing Trail extends 3.3 miles one way from the south end of the Lower Lake loop through pine and spruce-hemlock forest to a lookout over the waters of Taiya Inlet. To reach the Dewey Lakes trail system, cross Pullen Creek at the end of Second Avenue and then head north for about an eighth of a mile, keeping your eyes out for the trailhead marker on your right. Stop by the Visitor’s Bureau or the National Park Service Visitor’s Center before setting out for additional hiking information, including trail maps and conditions.

3. **Yakutania Point Trail**
   - Scan the waters of Taiya Inlet and the mouth of the Skagway River for scoters, Barrow’s goldeneye, buffleheads, harlequin ducks and red-breasted mergansers. Stand on the footbridge over the Skagway River near the trailhead to look for arctic terns, which nest nearby. The shore between Yakutania Point and the mouth of the Skagway River is a favorite haunt for the eulachon (a small oily fish) run in late April and early May that attracts large numbers of bird species throughout the summer. The small roadside lakes just across the Skagway River has a salmon run between July and September that attracts both black and brown bears. Look for beaver dams and lodges around mile two and three, with late evening hours the best time to see these busy rodents. Early summer is a good time for beaver viewing, when juveniles are evicted from their parents’ lodge and search for a new home. Watch and listen for eulachon salmon runs and abundance of wildlife each year. The Dyea Flats at the estuary where the Taiya River meets Dyea Inlet has a eulachon run in late April and early May that attracts large numbers of harbor seals, stellar sea lions and bald eagles. Eulachon are small (up to 10 inches), oily fish, and are the first major food source for many animals after the scarcity of winter. Harbor seals and bald eagles return to Dyea during the coho, pink and chum salmon runs between July and September. The salmon also attract bears to the river and estuary. Watch for bears and bear signs like scat, tracks and tree scratches. Great blue herons are seen throughout the year, and a variety of shorebirds and waterfowl come to the estuary each spring and summer. Pullovers along the 12-mile road to Dyea offer views of Long Bay, where relatively calm waters and abundant food sources attract harbor seals and harbor porpoises, as well as marbled murrelets, harlequin ducks and Barrow’s goldeneye. Bald eagles often perch in the trees along the road. Stop at one of the many pullouts to search for their white heads amid the green. The well-maintained gravel road to Dyea branches off from the Klondike Highway a few hundred yards north of town. The National Park Service maintains a campground and offers interpretive walks in the old Dyea townsite in the summer. Commercial guided tours to Dyea are available as well.

4. **Chilkoot Trail**
   - was a primary route for gold rush stampedes in 1898. The 33-mile trail now provides hikers the opportunity for a multi-day excursion that follows in prospectors’ footsteps. The Chilkoot is also a popular day-hiking spot; day hikers pass along the Taiya River, which has a salmon run between July and September that attracts both black and brown bears. Look for beaver dams and lodges around mile two and three, with late evening hours the best time to see these busy rodents. Early summer is a good time for beaver viewing, when juveniles are evicted from their parents’ lodge and search for a new home. Watch and listen for eulachon salmon runs and abundance of wildlife each year. The Dyea Flats at the estuary where the Taiya River meets Dyea Inlet has a eulachon run in late April and early May that attracts large numbers of harbor seals, stellar sea lions and bald eagles. Eulachon are small (up to 10 inches), oily fish, and are the first major food source for many animals after the scarcity of winter. Harbor seals and bald eagles return to Dyea during the coho, pink and chum salmon runs between July and September. The salmon also attract bears to the river and estuary. Watch for bears and bear signs like scat, tracks and tree scratches. Great blue herons are seen throughout the year, and a variety of shorebirds and waterfowl come to the estuary each spring and summer. Pullovers along the 12-mile road to Dyea offer views of Long Bay, where relatively calm waters and abundant food sources attract harbor seals and harbor porpoises, as well as marbled murrelets, harlequin ducks and Barrow’s goldeneye. Bald eagles often perch in the trees along the road. Stop at one of the many pullouts to search for their white heads amid the green. The well-maintained gravel road to Dyea branches off from the Klondike Highway a few hundred yards north of town. The National Park Service maintains a campground and offers interpretive walks in the old Dyea townsite in the summer. Commercial guided tours to Dyea are available as well.

**Skagway**

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- Keep an eye out for rufous hummingbirds, northern goshawks, Townsend’s warblers, kingfishers and other species throughout the summer. Water birds include brown creepers and golden-crowned kinglets.

- Watch for bears and bear signs like scat, tracks and tree scratches. Great blue herons are seen throughout the year, and a variety of shorebirds and waterfowl come to the estuary each spring and summer. Pullovers along the 12-mile road to Dyea offer views of Long Bay, where relatively calm waters and abundant food sources attract harbor seals and harbor porpoises, as well as marbled murrelets, harlequin ducks and Barrow’s goldeneye. Bald eagles often perch in the trees along the road. Stop at one of the many pullouts to search for their white heads amid the green. The well-maintained gravel road to Dyea branches off from the Klondike Highway a few hundred yards north of town. The National Park Service maintains a campground and offers interpretive walks in the old Dyea townsite in the summer. Commercial guided tours to Dyea are available as well.

**Hiking on the Chilkoot Trail**

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**Hiking trails**

- Dewey Lakes Trail System
- Yakutania Point Trail
- Klondike Highway
- Dyea
- Chilkoot Trail

**Rules and Fees**

- Use common sense, respect wildlife and the environment, keep a safe distance and do not disturb wildlife.

**Most Popular Sites**

- Dewey Lakes Trail System
- Yakutania Point Trail
- Klondike Highway
- Dyea
- Chilkoot Trail

**Hiking Trails**

- Wheelchair accessible
- Interpretive signs/guides
- Hiking trails
- Camping in area

**Guided Tours**

- Interpretive walks in the old Dyea townsite
- Commercial guided tours to Dyea

**Fees and Permits**

- 1 Fee for tours and camping only. + Multi-day trips allow for the richest experience.