

Atlassing in British Columbia's Great Bear Rainforest

The Project

The British Columbia Breeding Bird Atlas is BSC's flagship project for citizen-science in BC. The Atlas goal is to map the distribution and abundance of breeding birds in British Columbia over the next five years. To do so requires hundreds of volunteers to visit specific locations to record the presence and abundance of breeding birds. This project will be the largest citizen science action ever undertaken in BC. The results will be available on line to everyone and will become a foundation for federal and provincial government conservation policy for years to come. A big challenge for the project is to access some of the most remote wilderness areas in the world to record birds. And that is why we are launching an expedition to the Great Bear Rainforest.



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The Expedition

By sea to the land of whales, bears, eagles and ancient forest - imagine the dawn chorus of songbirds echoing through moss laden ancient forest. This is the Great Bear Rainforest of British Columbia's central coast. Thanks to our partner the Pacific Wildlife Foundation, Bird Studies Canada has an opportunity for two people to join a research expedition in the ages-old tradition of sailing ship-based research that contributed to some of the greatest natural history discoveries.

The first cruise will be to the Broughton Archipelago and the southern reaches of the Great Bear Rainforest. By supporting the expedition, you can spend one, two or three weeks birding and enjoying nature with renowned expedition leaders. Our research platform will be onboard a comfortable sailboat traveling by day and anchoring in quiet bays for the evening. We will devote the morning to birding and spending the afternoons exploring and sailing. The area is world renowned for its abundance of humpback and killer whales, black and grizzly bears, wolves and salmon streams.

The crew and researchers have led ecotours on the coast and all agree that there is no finer way to get a sense of place than on a working voyage. One will actually work with researchers and visit areas seldom visited by residents and rarely, if ever seen by tourists.



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Our Boat

We will sail on Ark Angel - a 43 foot Dufour sailboat fully equipped for charter with all the standard Canadian Coast Guard approved safety equipment. There are three double staterooms and two single bunks, a galley, salon, furnace and two heads with hot showers. With all the amenities of a comfortable vessel and the very experienced crew, this is truly a unique opportunity to enjoy the wilderness of the coast. The best time for the research project is in June and BSC is being offered a very special charter rate to have Ark Angel involved in the BC Breeding Bird Atlas project.



The Crew

Our skippers will be Ark Angel's owners Bev Ford and Rod MacVicar. Both are licensed mariners with a combined 8 decades of sailing and boating on the British Columbia and Alaska coast. Dr. Rob Butler from BSC will be the scientist-in-charge of the expedition. Rob is a former senior CWS scientist, professor, author, naturalist and Coordinator of the British Columbia Breeding Bird Atlas. He has lead ecotours to the Great Bear Rainforest for over a decade. You can read more about Rob and Rod at the Pacific Wildlife Foundation web site (www.pwlf.org) where they serve on the Board of Directors.



Getting On Board

You can join the crew for one, two or three weeks from June 1-21, 2008. The cost departing Port Hardy is \$4333 per person per week (\$8666 for two weeks, \$12,999 for three weeks). The cost includes all meals from lunch on the first day to breakfast on the last day, all accommodation onboard ship, skipper and biologist, and full use of all onboard facilities. A cook will prepare all meals. We carry ample quantities of fresh vegetables, fruits, meats, grains and dairy products, water and soft drinks. Meals are served buffet style. Wine is served with dinner. There is no bar onboard to purchase additional drinks. You are welcome to bring cocktail, beer and additional soft drinks. There is a laptop to review digital pictures and 110 V for digital camera battery and cell phone charging. Be prepared for some gusty winds and rain, although we should expect clear skies. A sleeping bag, warm clothing, rain gear, rubber boots and personal toiletries are essential items. Smoking is not allowed onboard the boat. Not included is transportation to the starting point and from the finish point of the trip, any accommodation or meals prior to the start or after the completion of a trip, travel or cancellation insurance or airport transfers. The only money participants require during the trip is for optional purchases and gratuities for the crew.

To learn more contact Rob Butler at rbutler@bsc-eoc.org or 604-940-4672.

