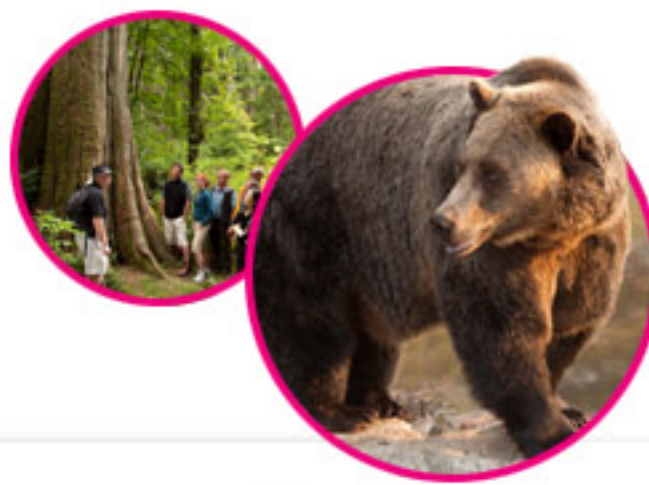


 A Tourism Vancouver Publication



Vancouver, like a local



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*Special Nature/Wildlife Edition*

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Welcome to this issue of *V! Nature*, a newsletter geared to the traveler interested in wilder (and wildlife) opportunities. It's evident that April in Vancouver has arrived when the blossoming of the city's 40,000 cherry trees takes place. A robust lineup of festival activities and events is available through the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival, April 5-28, and the Sakura Days Fair, April 7-8. Also featured in this month's newsletter are a couple great suggestions on where to catch a glimpse of some common, and less common birds - Bald Eagles, Horned Owls, Snow Geese and vibrantly coloured ducks. Read on to find out more!

## Streets in Bloom in Vancouver: Cherry Blossom Festival, April 5-28



What do nearly 40,000 cherry trees in bloom look like? Imagine whole city blocks on fire with vibrant pinks and whites. Picture a sea of petals, whirling in the breeze and blanketing sidewalks. Envision families and friends picnicking beneath a canopy of fragrant blossoms.

Come and see for yourself during Vancouver's annual [Cherry Blossom Festival](#), April 5-28. Each year, the festival pays homage to the city's thousands of ornamental cherry trees, which

originated as a gift from Japan in the 1930s. This year's festival is one of the largest ever with a full line-up of cherry-themed events. Here are a few highlights:

**Blossom Viewing:** Some 50 different types of cherry trees will be blooming in 800 different locations around Vancouver during the festival. Check out the special [Cherry Blossom Viewing Map](#) for the best sites.

**Cherry Jam Downtown Concert, April 5:** Culinary tips from sushi super chef Hidekazu Tojo, dance lessons and live performances highlight this free event at the Burrard SkyTrain station. You can also try out the special [SakuraB bento lunch box](#) (\$20), featuring sushi and Japanese treats prepared by Vancouver's top Japanese chefs. [More info.](#)

**Sakura Days Japan Fair, April 7-8:** This two day festival in world-renowned [VanDusen Botanical Garden](#) celebrates traditional and modern Japanese culture, with tea ceremonies, regional delicacies and sake tastings, origami and flower-arranging workshops and, of course, guided flower viewing tours. Festivities also include performances of Japanese classical dance, drumming, martial arts and music. [More info.](#)

**Cherry Blossom Umbrella Dance, April 14:** Join thousands of cherry fanatics for a unique flash-mob dance in front of the [Vancouver Art Gallery](#). Strut your stuff to a hit Bollywood soundtrack, while twirling a bright pink cherry blossom umbrella. [More info.](#)

For the complete line-up of Cherry Blossom Festival events, visit the [official website](#).

## For the Birds: World-Class Bird Watching on Vancouver's Doorstep

I'm staring at a regal, three-foot-tall sandhill crane, its slender legs knee-deep in a seaside marsh outside of Vancouver. It sizes me up with its bright pink head – flamboyant colors worthy of a flamingo – then extends its elegant neck and lets out a majestic, ear-splitting squawk.

The stunning bird's winter home is the [George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary](#), a 850-acre wetland on the Fraser River, approximately 40 minutes from downtown Vancouver. The sanctuary is one of a network of parks and habitats along the Fraser Delta and surrounding bays that make the area a top destination for bird watchers.



The [Reifel Sanctuary](#) is the preferred stopover for countless ducks and birds making their annual migration along the Pacific Coast. From bald eagles and horned owls to snow geese and brilliantly colored wood ducks, more than 250 bird species pass through the sanctuary over the course of the year. An elaborate network of raised trails winds through the park, with bird blinds and an observation tower for optimal viewing.

Just a few miles away, [Boundary Bay Regional Park](#) offers equally impressive watching for birders. Tidal flats extend far into the bay, attracting some 1.5 million birds from 20 countries as they migrate along the Pacific Flyway. The waterfront park features more than 12 miles of trails that snake along the shore and through marshes and dunes. Seasonal visitors include red-tailed hawks and bald eagles, snowy owls and ospreys, sandpipers and more than 100 other species.

For more information about bird watching in Vancouver, visit [Birding in British Columbia](#).

## Events and Offers

- [Grab Your Skis and Hit Cypress Mountain](#) - Located a 30-45-minute drive from downtown in West Vancouver, Cypress Mountain is considered the most popular cross country skiing destination in all of Canada. Cypress boasts 19 kilometres of groomed/classic track trails with skating lanes, with 7.5 kilometres outfitted for night skiing.
- [Eco Fashion Week](#) (April 10 - 12) - During this event, designers present their newest collections while adhering to guidelines that stay true to Eco Fashion Week's "green" credo. Stylish yet sustainable, this event is not to be missed.
- [Vancouver Sun Run](#) (April 15) - The 28th annual Vancouver Sun Run encourages walkers and runners of all skill levels to hit the streets for a day of outdoor activity, live entertainment and complimentary treats. With more than 50,000 "sun runners" participating in the event annually, the Sun Run is Canada's biggest 10-kilometre road race.
- Check out Tourism Vancouver's [Interactive Events Calendar](#) to stay up to date on all there is to see and do in the city!
- Check out Tourism Vancouver's [Hotel Packages and Room Only Specials](#).

