

A black bear stands on a large, moss-covered fallen log in a dense rainforest. The log is partially submerged in a body of water, with its reflection visible. The background is filled with lush green foliage and trees, creating a misty atmosphere. The text "August... In The Great Bear Rainforest" is overlaid in a large, bold, serif font at the top of the image.

# August... In The Great Bear Rainforest

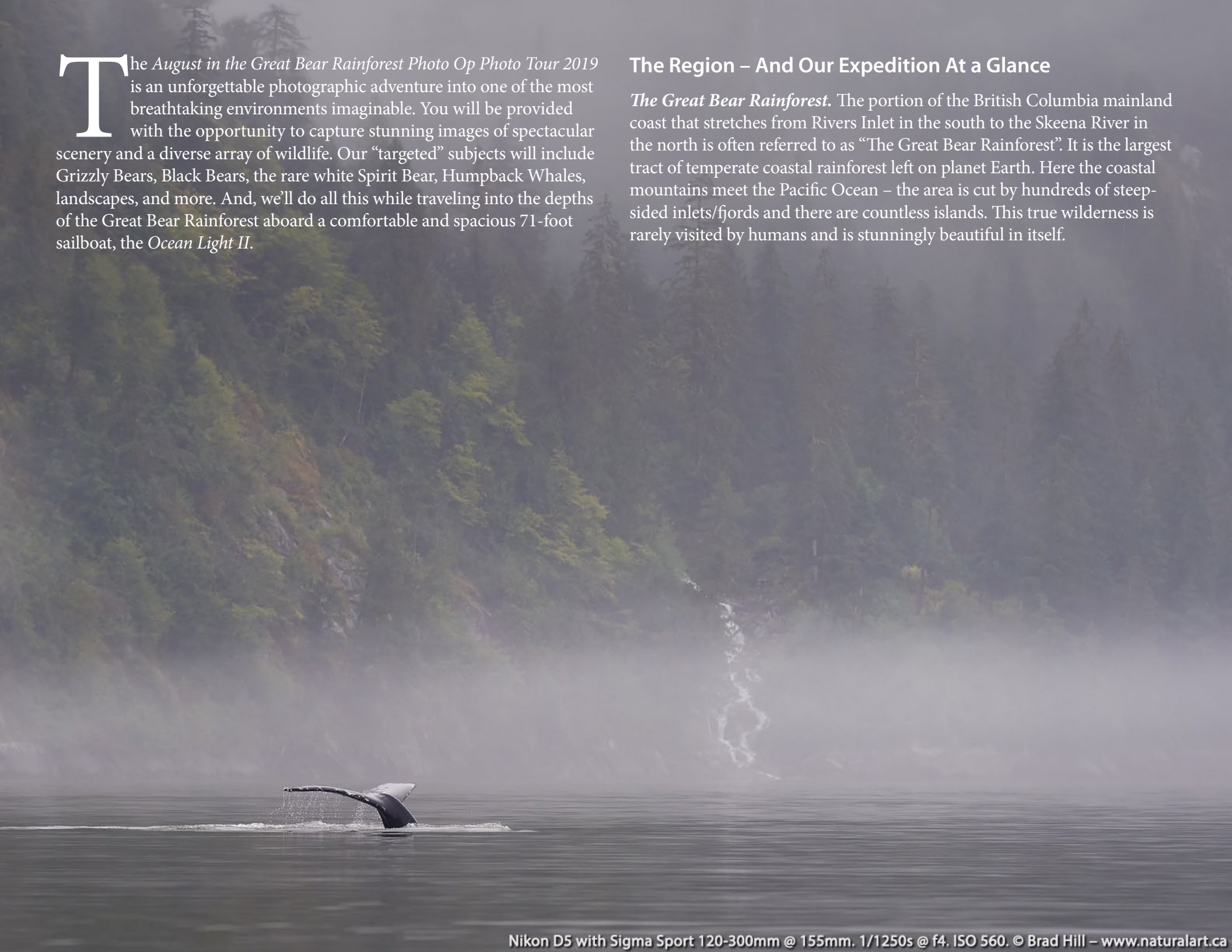
Photo Op Photo Tour 2019



**T**he August in the Great Bear Rainforest Photo Op Photo Tour 2019 is an unforgettable photographic adventure into one of the most breathtaking environments imaginable. You will be provided with the opportunity to capture stunning images of spectacular scenery and a diverse array of wildlife. Our “targeted” subjects will include Grizzly Bears, Black Bears, the rare white Spirit Bear, Humpback Whales, landscapes, and more. And, we’ll do all this while traveling into the depths of the Great Bear Rainforest aboard a comfortable and spacious 71-foot sailboat, the *Ocean Light II*.

## The Region – And Our Expedition At a Glance

**The Great Bear Rainforest.** The portion of the British Columbia mainland coast that stretches from Rivers Inlet in the south to the Skeena River in the north is often referred to as “The Great Bear Rainforest”. It is the largest tract of temperate coastal rainforest left on planet Earth. Here the coastal mountains meet the Pacific Ocean – the area is cut by hundreds of steep-sided inlets/fjords and there are countless islands. This true wilderness is rarely visited by humans and is stunningly beautiful in itself.





**A Ghost on the Coast!** Coastal Gray Wolves are quite common in the Great Bear Rainforest. But, with their secretive nature what isn't common is actually seeing or photographing one! © Brad Hill – [www.naturalart.ca](http://www.naturalart.ca)



Nikon D5 with Sigma Sport 500mm f4. 1/1250s @ f6.3. ISO 1800.

And, it is literally teeming with wildlife, including Grizzly Bears, Black (and Spirit) Bears, coastal Gray Wolves, Wolverines, Otters, American Martens, Bald Eagles, Humpback Whales, Killer Whales (Orcas), Harbour Seals, Steller Sea Lions, many species of waterfowl and seabirds, and more! The photographic opportunities on this tour are always absolutely amazing.

**About The Spirit Bear.** The almost mythical Spirit Bear is a rare, white-phased form of the American Black Bear. The subspecies of Black Bear found within the Great Bear Rainforest is *Ursus americanus kermodei* – the Kermode Bear. All the black bears in the Great Bear Rainforest (of any coat colour) are Kermode Bears. But not all Kermodes are white – only the rare Spirit Bear possesses the white coat.

Spirit Bears are not albinos. The white coat colour is caused by a recessive

gene and only those bears with two copies of the gene (one inherited from the mother and one inherited from the father) have white coats. Bears that possess one copy of the recessive white coat gene and one copy of the gene for a “normal” coat have typical black coats and are carriers of the trait. The white coat colour of Spirit Bears can theoretically be found in Black Bears anywhere, but they are exceptionally rare in all parts of the Black Bears’ range. The one exception is on a small portion of the British Columbia coast where, for reasons that are only poorly understood, between 10 and 20 percent of the bears are white!

**A Tour of Exploration!** The *August in the Great Bear Rainforest Photo Op Photo Tour* is a true tour of photographic exploration. We’ll explore the inlets, bays and old-growth forest of the spectacular mid-coast of British



Columbia. We'll walk trails, explore creeks, and search for the unique mix of subject matter that only the Great Bear Rainforest can provide – Grizzly Bears, Black Bears, Spirit Bears, Humpback Whales, many bird species, landscapes, and more. Due to potentially extreme weather conditions and rough terrain, and to maximize our chances of seeing a Spirit Bear, we may utilize native-built viewing platforms in certain situations.

This is a multi-faceted trip, focusing not only on the bears, but on *all* the inhabitants of the Great Bear Rainforest – and the entire ecosystem in which they thrive. While the bears are an integral part of this trip, we will be approaching this trip *with an attitude of finding and capturing any form of natural beauty and natural art we can find*. This may include many species of terrestrial and marine wildlife and birds, intertidal scenes, landscapes, seascapes, and more! *If your sole goal is to photograph bears (to the exclusion of other subject matter you will be presented with), this may not be the trip for you.*

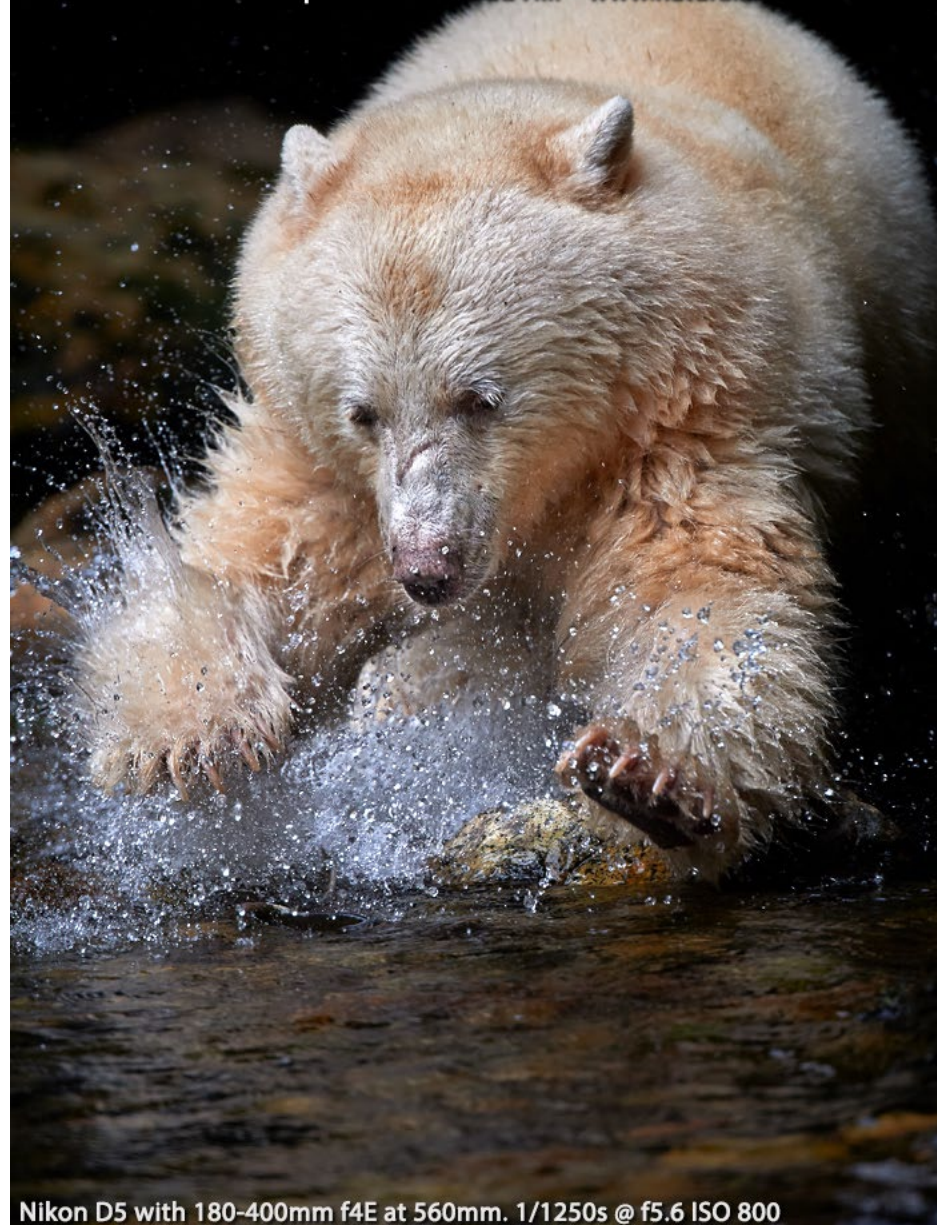
**2019 Trip Start and End Points:** The photo tour begins in Bella Bella, BC. It ends in Kitimat/Terrace, BC.

**2019 Date:** August 21-29, 2019, including arrival and departure days. Aboard the *Ocean Light II* from August 21-29, 2019.

### What's Included?

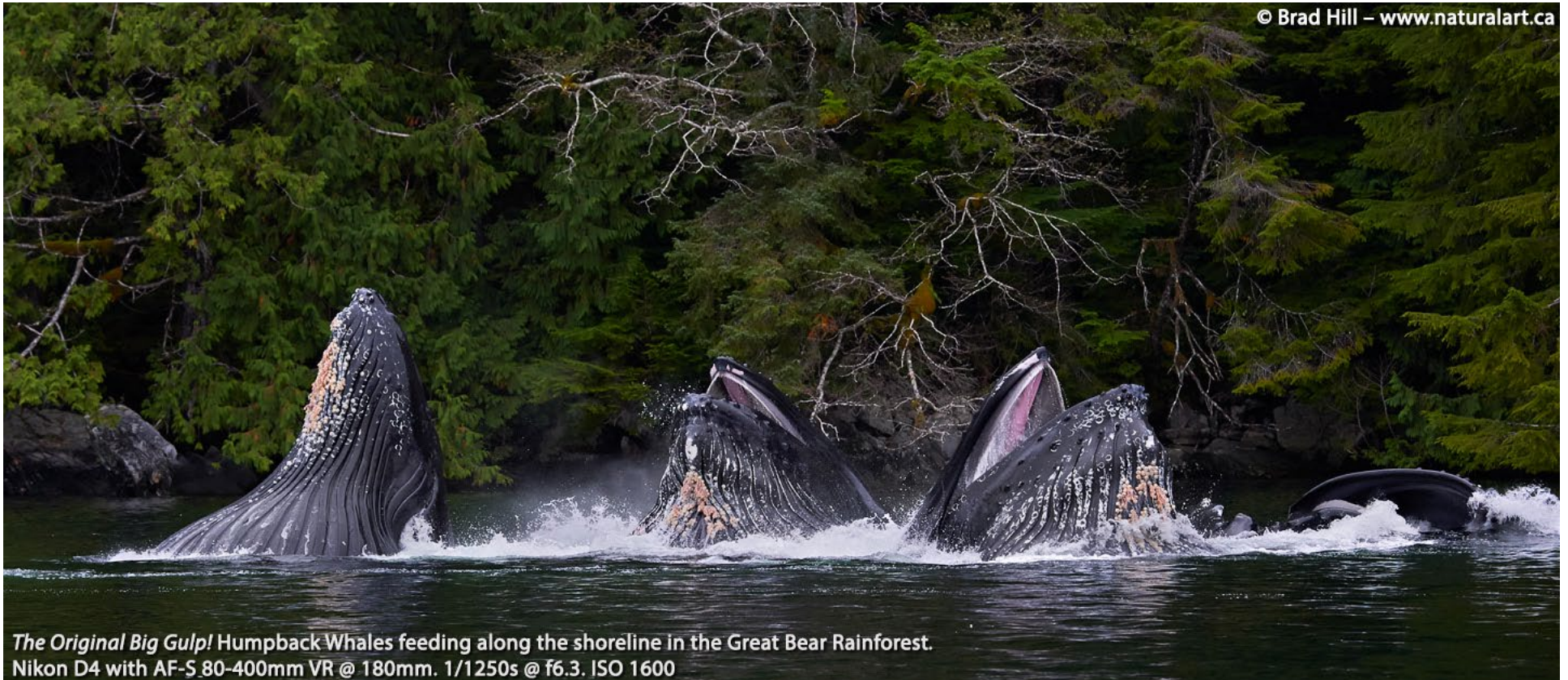
- All meals and accommodation beginning on the evening of Day 1 (see Itinerary)
- 7 full days aboard the beautiful Ocean Light II – a 71" ketch sailboat
- A highly-experienced bear guide and professional photography guide
- A great cook and crew
- Use of Zodiac® and all associated safety gear (life jackets, etc.)
- Photographic opportunities that only a marine excursion through the Great Bear Rainforest can provide!

**The Pounce – Fishing Spirit Bear!** All Black Bears in the region are of the *Kermodei* subspecies but only those with two recessive genes for the white coat become all-white Spirit Bears. © Brad Hill – [www.naturalart.ca](http://www.naturalart.ca)



Nikon D5 with 180-400mm f4E at 560mm. 1/1250s @ f5.6 ISO 800





## What's Not Included?

- Transportation between your home and Bella Bella, BC at the beginning of the trip and from Terrace, BC to your home at the end of the trip
- Personal belongings and equipment as per "Gear Lists"
- Any meals and accommodation in Bella Bella, BC prior to the evening on Day 1
- Any extra personal expenses incurred because of weather, logistical delays, or missed flights
- Any gratuities for the crew of the *Ocean Light II*

## What To Expect?

- Cool weather (daytime highs of about 12-20C or 54-68° fahrenheit); rain showers, with the possibility of heavy rain
- Mostly calm seas, but with some short-duration bouts of rolling water
- Hearty, healthy and delicious food
- Always warm, always dry floating basecamp!
- A truly unique and once-in-a-lifetime experience!

**Photo Tour Leader:** Terri Shaddick. If you don't already know Terri, find out more about her right here:

[www.naturalart.ca/wares/phototour.html#anchor\\_terrishaddick](http://www.naturalart.ca/wares/phototour.html#anchor_terrishaddick)



**Accommodation:** During the entire trip (including our time in Bella Bella and when in the Great Bear Rainforest) we will be staying on the *Ocean Light II* sailboat, a 71-foot ketch. Please be aware that it is likely you will be asked to share a berth on the *Ocean Light II*. This will be dependent on the make-up of the group (e.g., the number of couples attending, gender mix of the participants, etc.).

## Fitness Requirements of Participants

This photo tour requires a moderate level of physical fitness and good mobility. We will be hiking during 2 or 3 days while on this trip and we will be shooting images from the deck of the sailboat, from within a Zodiac®, and on shore. To participate in this trip you should be able to perform the following tasks:

- **Be able to hike up to 2-3 km (up to 2 miles) on uneven, slanted and potentially slippery terrain and/or over some obstacles that could be up to a meter or slightly more high (e.g., large fallen logs) – all while carrying your own camera gear.** In most years our best Spirit Bear photography ops come from selected locations on islands. Access to these locations is by walking only.
- **Be able to easily move between the sailboat and the Zodiac®.** This involves climbing up or down a 5' vertical ladder.
- **Shoot your camera from within a Zodiac®.** This involves multiple tasks, including shooting your camera while sitting on the pontoon of the Zodiac® or, at times, while sitting on the floor of the Zodiac®. In some cases you may find that the most convenient way to shoot will be while kneeling (on your knees) on the bottom of the Zodiac®. This is the reason knee pads are included as optional items on the gear list. Note that tripods can **not** be used within the Zodiac® and while it is theoretically possible to use a monopod in the Zodiac®, few photographers find it practical. The obvious consequence is that you must be able to **hand-hold the camera/lens system** that you will be bringing and using on this photo tour.

On some occasions it WILL be possible to stand in the Zodiac® when

**Seeking Natural Art!** While finding and working with several species of "charismatic megafauna" is a big part of our experience, we'll be approaching this trip with an attitude of *finding and capturing any form of natural beauty and natural art we can find.*



Nikon D2Xs with Nikkor 200mm f2.0 VR. 1/400s @ f6.3. ISO 100  
© Brad Hill – [www.naturalart.ca](http://www.naturalart.ca)



shooting, but you will be shooting while sitting or kneeling far more frequently. A degree of flexibility and/or suppleness can make your time in the Zodiac® far more productive and enjoyable!

## Sample Itinerary

**NOTE:** The itinerary of the *August in the Great Bear Rainforest Photo Tour* is designed for flexibility, allowing us to react to the ever-changing distribution and abundance of wildlife and fluctuating weather conditions. Our primary “target” species will be Grizzly Bears, Black Bears, Spirit Bears and Humpback Whales. We’ll observe and photograph other species and landscapes as opportunities present themselves. Please note that this is only a *sample itinerary* and how we actually spend our days may differ from this proposed route and schedule.

### ***Day 1 – August 21, 2019***

Arrive in Bella Bella, BC. Make your way to the Shearwater Resort and Marina on Denny Island. Our first official activity will be meeting in the restaurant for dinner at 6:00 PM. Following dinner we’ll board the *Ocean Light II* and settle in for our trip through the Great Bear Rainforest!

### ***Day 2 – August 22, 2019***

Awake to a wonderful and hearty breakfast on the *Ocean Light II*! Then, we’ll shove off and begin our exploration of the Great Bear Rainforest. Photographic opportunities can begin almost immediately!

### ***Days 3 through 8 – August 23-28, 2019***

Tour through the Great Bear Rainforest with stops in numerous locations



**Eagles in the Mist.** There is no better place to capture images of eagles and other wildlife with stunning backdrops than the Great Bear Rainforest. Nikon D4 with 70-200mm f4 VR @ 150mm. 1/160s @ f8. ISO 720. © Brad Hill – [www.naturalart.ca](http://www.naturalart.ca)





**Fueling the Great Bear.** The annual late summer and autumn spawning runs of 5 species of salmon provides the energy and nutrients that drives the entire ecosystem we know as the Great Bear Rainforest.

Nikon D600 with 24-70mm f2.8 @ 35mm. 1.0s @ f16. ISO 200

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to photograph our “targeted” wildlife species, and other species as opportunistically encountered. Humpback Whales typically frequent the inlets and bays at this time of year and we will watch and photograph these magnificent mammals when the opportunity presents itself. We will use the *Ocean Light II* as a base, and a motorized inflatable to transfer people between the boat and the shore. Four kayaks are on the *Ocean Light II* for those wishing to enjoy the tranquility of paddling as we explore one of the last unlogged temperate rainforests in the world.

Note that Terri will be available to give informal photography instruction between shooting sessions and in the evenings. It is very difficult to offer any instruction when actually working with the bears or other wildlife as we will have to remain as motionless and quiet as possible.

### **Day 9 – August 29, 2019**

Breakfast on the *Ocean Light II* at or near Kitimat, BC., followed by transport by shuttle to the Terrace airport. Our time together in the fabulous Great Bear Rainforest will then draw to an end, but you’ll be left with many fabulous memories and photographs!

## **Our Ethical Stance – *Wildlife FIRST!***

Wildlife conservation is the primary reason for our involvement in wildlife photography. As such, *we place the welfare and value of our subjects above the value of any photograph of them.* This philosophy is embodied in our **Wildlife FIRST** rules of conduct that guide our actions during all our photo tours. These four simple ethical rules state that:

1. We engage in **PASSIVE** wildlife photography only. This means we strive to capture images of wildlife behaving as naturally as possible and without the use of “set-ups”, contrivances, or any actions that could guide the subjects toward desirable settings and/or backdrops or elicit specific “poses”.
2. We do nothing intentional to alter or influence the behaviour of our subject(s) for the purposes of photography. This means we do not



engage in any form of luring or baiting (or any other form of food supplementation). Additionally, we will not use any form of sound to alter the behaviour of the subject for the purpose of photography (including using predator and/or prey calls, vocal clicking, or making any other sound to encourage the subject to look at us).

3. While respecting any legal guidelines on minimum approach distances, we always allow the wildlife subject – regardless of the species – to determine the distance it is *comfortable with* between itself and us. This principle not only serves to reduce the stress on the subject, but it also allows photographers to capture the subject behaving in a more natural, and often more interesting, fashion.

4. We strive to always consider both the individual and collective effects our photographic activities can have on our subjects. This includes being aware of the total time spent with the subjects. This means we will often break contact and withdraw from the subject, especially if there is any indication that our presence is impacting on the subject's behavioural routine (including activities such as feeding, resting and/or sleeping, caring for its offspring, etc.). This consideration is always important and may become even MORE important if multiple photographers or groups of photographers are working with the same subject.

Those participating in our photo tours are expected to conform to these rules of photographer conduct.



*Shake it Up!* Adult male Grizzly pausing in his pursuit of prey for a quick shake.

Nikon D4 with 400mm f2.8 VR. 1/400s @ f6.3. ISO 560.

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Coy – Harbor Seal



Nikon D850 with Nikkor 400mm f2.8 VR. 1/640s @ f4.5. ISO 640

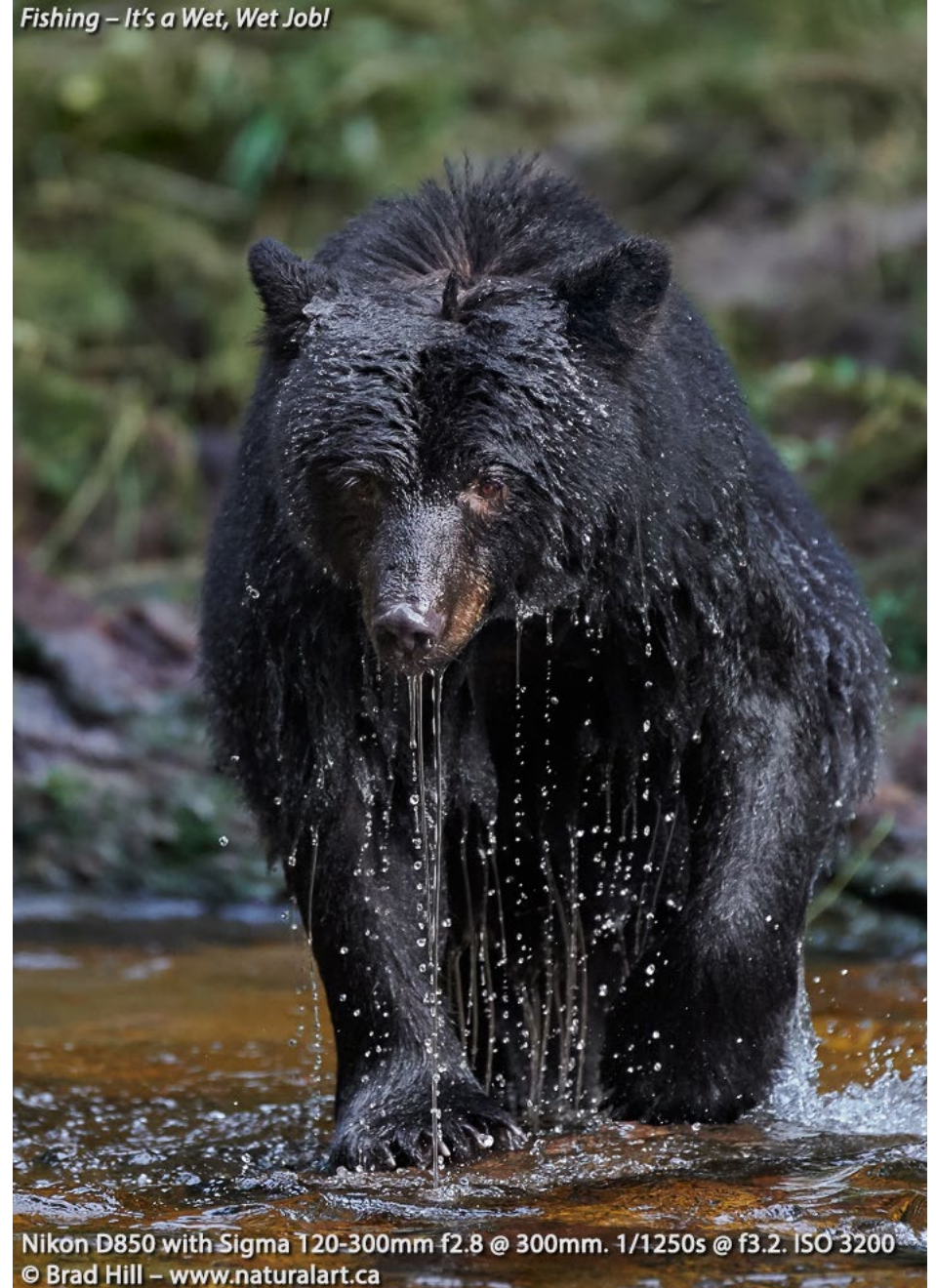
All images in this brochure and the Natural Art Images website ([www.naturalart.ca](http://www.naturalart.ca)) were captured following these *Wildlife FIRST* rules of photographer conduct.

For more information about this amazing trip contact Brad Hill at:  
[seminars@naturalart.ca](mailto:seminars@naturalart.ca)

Cheers...

Brad & Terri

Fishing – It's a Wet, Wet Job!



Nikon D850 with Sigma 120-300mm f2.8 @ 300mm. 1/1250s @ f3.2. ISO 3200  
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**BREACH!** Humpback Whale numbers have been on the rise in recent years in the channels and inlets of the Great Bear Rainforest. In the autumn they pause their migration to feed and socialize in the nutrient-rich waters. The whales are commonly seen during our photo tours – but capturing images of breaches is always a special and rare treat!

Nikon D5 with Sigma Sport 150-600 zoom @ 390mm. ISO 1250. © Brad Hill – [www.naturalart.ca](http://www.naturalart.ca)





*The Great Bear's Lookout. Grizzly watching over its domain – in comfort & style!*





*Unnamed Falls!* Go off the beaten path in the Great Bear and you can find stunning scenes that few have ever witnessed.





*Coming & Going. Humpback whale surfacing and blowing and abruptly doing a deep dive.*

