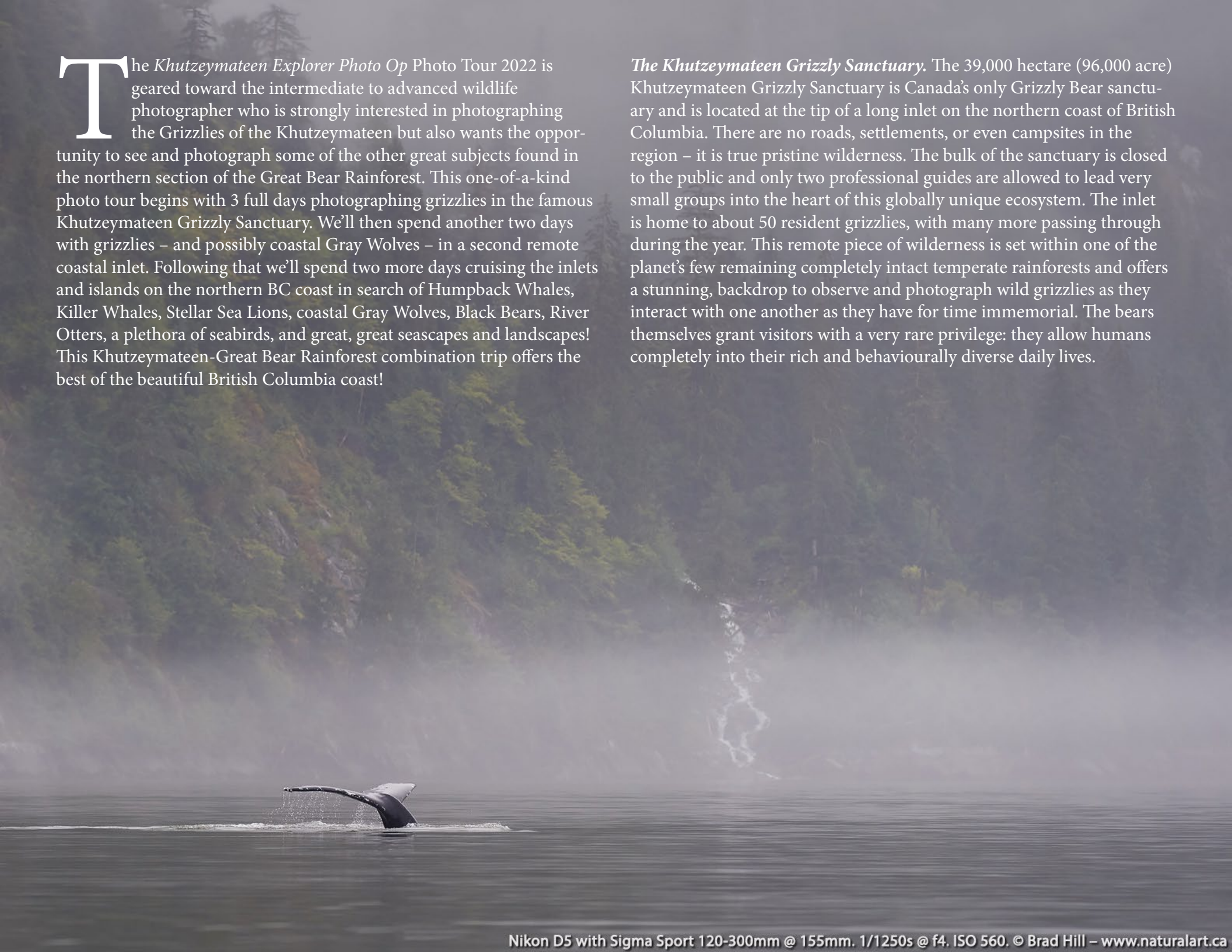


The Khutzeymateen Explorer

Photo Op Photo Tour 2022





The *Khutzeymateen Explorer Photo Op* Photo Tour 2022 is geared toward the intermediate to advanced wildlife photographer who is strongly interested in photographing the Grizzlies of the Khutzeymateen but also wants the opportunity to see and photograph some of the other great subjects found in the northern section of the Great Bear Rainforest. This one-of-a-kind photo tour begins with 3 full days photographing grizzlies in the famous Khutzeymateen Grizzly Sanctuary. We'll then spend another two days with grizzlies – and possibly coastal Gray Wolves – in a second remote coastal inlet. Following that we'll spend two more days cruising the inlets and islands on the northern BC coast in search of Humpback Whales, Killer Whales, Stellar Sea Lions, coastal Gray Wolves, Black Bears, River Otters, a plethora of seabirds, and great, great seascapes and landscapes! This Khutzeymateen-Great Bear Rainforest combination trip offers the best of the beautiful British Columbia coast!

The Khutzeymateen Grizzly Sanctuary. The 39,000 hectare (96,000 acre) Khutzeymateen Grizzly Sanctuary is Canada's only Grizzly Bear sanctuary and is located at the tip of a long inlet on the northern coast of British Columbia. There are no roads, settlements, or even campsites in the region – it is true pristine wilderness. The bulk of the sanctuary is closed to the public and only two professional guides are allowed to lead very small groups into the heart of this globally unique ecosystem. The inlet is home to about 50 resident grizzlies, with many more passing through during the year. This remote piece of wilderness is set within one of the planet's few remaining completely intact temperate rainforests and offers a stunning backdrop to observe and photograph wild grizzlies as they interact with one another as they have for time immemorial. The bears themselves grant visitors with a very rare privilege: they allow humans completely into their rich and behaviourally diverse daily lives.

Ghost of the Coast. Coastal Gray Wolves are not rare in the Khutzeymateen, but their secretive nature makes them a challenge to see or photograph. Nikon D4s with 400mm f2.8 VR. 1/500s @ f5.6. ISO 350. © Brad Hill – www.naturalart.ca



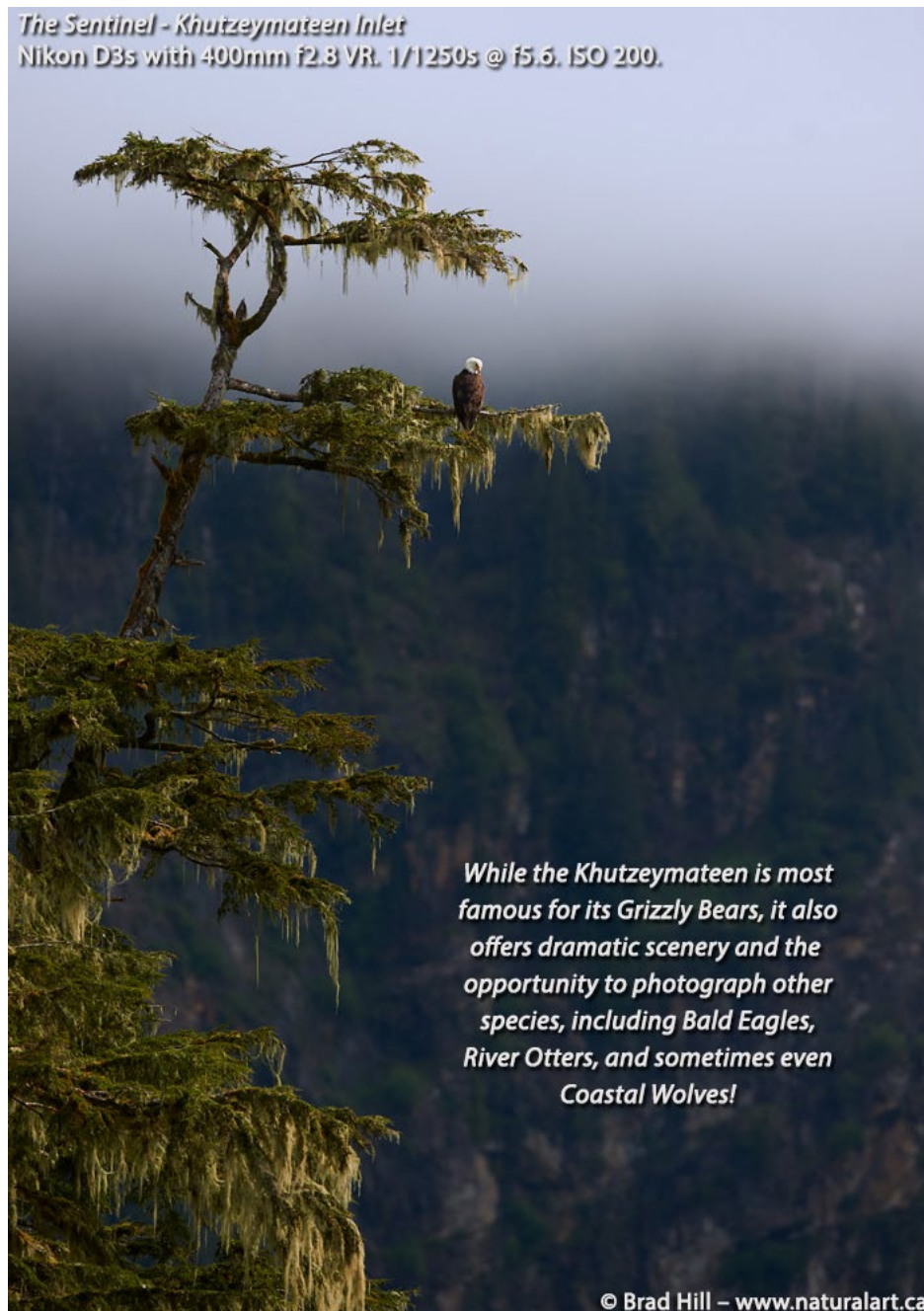
You'll be one of under 200 people – and far, far fewer photographers – annually gifted with the intimate experience of sharing the lives of the Grizzlies of the Khutzeymateen.

Once we leave the Khutzeymateen we'll begin touring the northernmost portion of the the largest tract of temperate coastal rainforest left on planet Earth – the Great Bear Rainforest. 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 region of the Great Bear is true wilderness and is rarely visited by humans. It is stunningly beautiful in itself. And, it is literally teeming with wildlife, including Grizzly Bears, Black (and Spirit) Bears, coastal Gray Wolves, Wolverines, Sea Otters, American Martens, Bald Eagles, Humpback Whales, Killer Whales, Sea Otters, Harbour Seals, Steller Sea Lions, many species of waterfowl and seabirds, and more! The photographic opportunities on this Khutzeymateen-Great Bear Rainforest combination photo tour will be absolutely amazing.

To explore and photograph the Khutzeymateen and surrounding rainforest we'll use a 60-foot Gulf Commander expedition power boat (the *Afterglow I*) as our floating basecamp and "exploration vessel". We'll also be using a motorized inflatable Zodiac® to assist us in exploring the nearshore areas and many islands and inlets.

About the Photography "Style" On This Photo Tour. On this trip – as on our other photo tours – this is a "*photography in true wilderness*" experience. This means we will spend most of our time in isolated and remote wilderness and away from other humans (and other photographers). We'll have to "track down" our subject matter without the help of other outfitters, spotters or real-time online apps listing recent sightings. Additionally we'll have no "set-up" situations where we can set up in a specific location ahead of time and with the knowledge that a certain species will predictably appear and pose for us! The advantage of our "*photography in true wilderness*" approach is that it produces a far more unique and personalized experience and it can often lead to more original and compelling photos. A possible downside is that it means we don't know the

The Sentinel - Khutzeymateen Inlet
Nikon D3s with 400mm f2.8 VR. 1/1250s @ f5.6. ISO 200.



While the Khutzeymateen is most famous for its Grizzly Bears, it also offers dramatic scenery and the opportunity to photograph other species, including Bald Eagles, River Otters, and sometimes even Coastal Wolves!

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specifics of the shooting conditions ahead of time and thus may put more onus on the photographer to make snap technical and creative decisions in a field setting. This means it may challenge – and encourage you to expand – your photographic skills more than other photo tours do!

Our Wildlife Subject Matter: While this is a *photography-in-true-wilderness* trip, we are definitely headed into a target-rich environment! Grizzlies are the dominant terrestrial mammal in this region and our primary target, but there are many other species that we may encounter and, when the opportunity presents itself, photograph.

Here's a quick run-down of both our “*most likely*” wildlife subjects and our “*less likely but possible*” wildlife subjects:

A. Most Likely Subjects (50% or greater probability of encounter):

- Grizzly Bears • Black Bears • Humpback Whales
- Bald Eagles • Harbour Seals • Great Blue Herons
- Harlequin Ducks • River Otters • Herring Gulls
- American Mink • Canada Geese • Steller Sea Lions
- Asst'd songbirds • Asst'd shorebirds • Common Loons

B. Less Likely But Possible Subjects (<50% probability of encounter):

- Killer Whales • Coastal Gray Wolves • Steller Sea Lions
- Dall's Porpoises • American Marten • Fin Whales
- Elephant Seals • Pacific White-sided Dolphins

2022 Dates: June 17-24, 2022.

2022 Price: \$7,399 CAD plus 5% GST.

What's Included?

- Float plane transportation into the Khutzeymateen
- All food and accommodation beginning on Day 1 of the tour (see Itinerary for details)

Going Down! A "natural" monochrome of a Humpback Whale diving deep in the Great Bear.

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Nikon D500 with Sigma Sport 120-300mm f2.8 @ 270mm. 1/1250s @ f4.5. ISO 800.

- A highly-experienced bear guide and professional photography guide
- A great cook and crew
- Jaw-dropping scenery, fabulous bears, and a great mix of other wild-life!

What's Not?

- Transportation between your home and Prince Rupert, BC
- Personal belongings and equipment as per "Clothing & Equipment List"
- Any meals and accommodation in Prince Rupert prior to Day 1

- Excess baggage charges from airlines
- Any extra personal expenses incurred because of weather, logistical delays, or delayed departures of chartered or scheduled aircraft
- Any gratuities for the crew of the *Afterglow*

What To Expect?

- Cool weather (daytime highs of about 12-20°C or 54-68° fahrenheit); rain showers are likely but usually short-lived (and sunny skies are NOT uncommon at this time of year)
- Totally calm water at our floating basecamp but with the possibility of some rolling water during the 2nd half of the photo tour.

- Very long hours of daylight (giving us ample time in the field)
- Unsurpassed wildlife photography opportunities
- Hearty, healthy and delicious food
- Always warm, always dry floating basecamp
- Great cameraderie and a true “bucket-list” experience!

Sample Itinerary

This is only a sample itinerary and how we actually spend our days during the photo tour may differ from below. Several factors interact to influence how we spend each day, including the location and abundance of the wildlife, the timing of the tides (we can only access some areas – such as the channels in the various estuaries – during high tides) and, of course, the weather. All of these factors change day-by-day.

Day 1 – June 17, 2022.

Arrive in Prince Rupert. Make your way to the Eagle Bluff Bed & Breakfast to check in and stow your gear. You may check-in any time during the day. If you arrive early in the day feel free to sightsee or check the town out. Plan on assembling at the Eagle Bluff at 6 PM for an informal “meet & greet”. Shortly following this we will head out for dinner together.

Day 2 – June 18, 2022.

Early breakfast at the B&B, followed by an early float plane trip into the Khutzeymateen. Following meeting the crew and guides of the *Afterglow* and allocating the cabins, we will spend as much time as possible out in the Zodiac® photographing grizzly bears.



The Welcoming Committee. Steller Sea Lions can be seen throughout the channels and inlets of the Great Bear Rainforest, but large groups like this are more commonly encountered on the outside and more exposed islands and coastlines.

Nikon D800 with Nikkor 70-400mm f2.8 @ 200mm. 1/1000s @ f8. ISO 400

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Stalking the Shoreline.

Nikon D4 with Sigma Sport 150-600mm zoom @ 180mm. 1/400s @ f11. ISO 2200.

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Days 3 & 4 – June 19 & 20, 2022

We will spend the majority of these in the Zodiac® viewing and photographing bears. Depending on the tides, our time will find us in some area of the inlet viewing and photographing what could be any number of animals, including grizzly and black bears, seals, eagles and herons. At dusk, after the evening's activities, you will return to the boat to enjoy a hot drink and dinner while reflecting on the day's events (and reviewing your images!). Late on June 19 we will move the *Afterglow* partway down the Khutzeymateen Inlet to view additional bears and stage ourselves for an early morning trip out of the inlet early the next morning.

Days 5 & 6 – June 21 & 22, 2022

We'll spend these days in the Kwinamass Bay and estuary – another hot spot for observing and photographing Grizzly Bears and other wildlife. With luck and good karma we may also find coastal Gray Wolves in this remote location.

Day 7 – June 23, 2022.

We'll now shift into Great Bear Rainforest and marine mammals mode as we travel from the Kwinamass to the quiet and sheltered Pearl Harbour where we'll set anchor. We'll be on the lookout for Humpback Whales,

Rough-housing in the Khutz!



Killer Whales, Dall's Porpoises, Pacific White-sided Dolphins, Stellar Sea Lions and more! We should have time for a Zodiac® excursion in the early evening with the possibility of encountering coastal gray wolves.

Day 8 – June 24, 2022.

After a hearty breakfast we'll set out for our photo tour endpoint – Prince Rupert, BC. Along the way we'll be on the lookout for marine mammals and both land- and seascape photo ops. We should arrive in Prince Rupert close to noon. After a final lunch together we'll disembark from the Afterglow and be left with lots of great memories and photos!

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

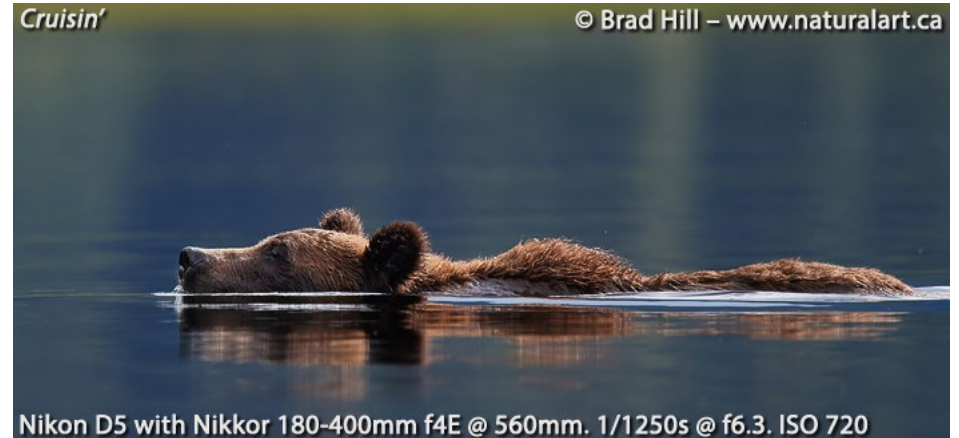
our photo tours. These four simple ethical rules state that:

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. 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,

The Tree of Life. Bald Eagles are always great subjects, but finding them perched in settings like this is like a photographer's dream come true!



Nikon D4s with Nikkor 400mm f2.8 VR. 1/640s @ f7.1. ISO 1800
© Brad Hill – www.naturalart.ca



Nikon D5 with Nikkor 180-400mm f4E @ 560mm. 1/1250s @ f6.3. ISO 720

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.

All images in this trip brochure and the Natural Art Images website (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

The Magical Khutzeymateen Estuary. The Khutzeymateen estuary has been referred to as the "Garden of the Grizzlies". It's an apt description!



Grizzly Cub – Brown on Green! Grizzlies of both sexes and all ages are found in the Kutzeymateen. In most years females avoid bringing first year cubs into the estuary owing to the threat posed by large male bears.







From Sea to Snow-covered Peaks. An aerial view of the fabulous Khutzeymateen Inlet – including the *Ocean Light II* sailboat...our home in the Khutzeymateen!
Nikon D4 with 70-200mm f4 @ 70mm 1/1600s @ f5.6. ISO 100.
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