



# Tofino Trip Report SD73 International Student Program

## April 22-25, 2022

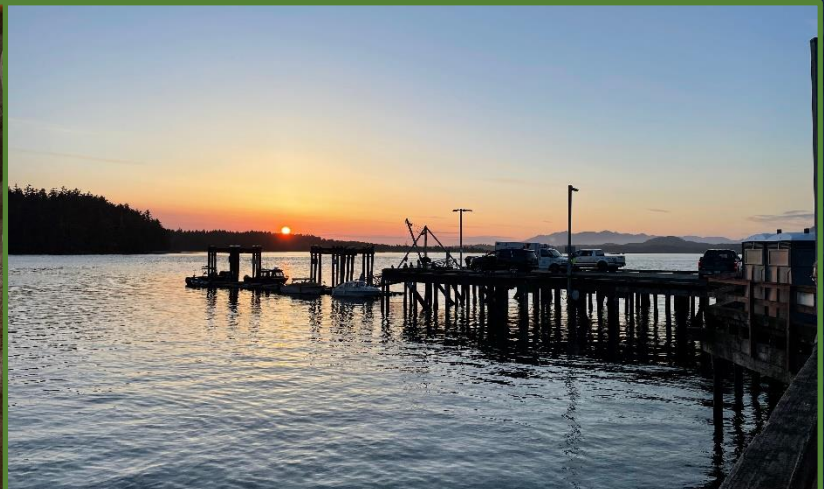




On April 22, 2022, 30 students and 4 chaperones left Kamloops at 7:00 am and headed south down the Coquihalla Highway to the Tsawwassen ferry terminal near Vancouver. Our itinerary was 3 nights in Tofino on the west Coast of Vancouver Island. We had a couple of washroom stops enroute including this one that included a food truck (pictured above) near the Summit of the Coquihalla Highway between Merritt and Hope. Our reserved spot on a ferry to Duke Point was on time and we boarded without issue. The photos below show us boarding, some cooperative Harbour Seals viewed from the top deck while docked, and other ferry pictures.



On Vancouver Island, we made our way towards the west coast along highway 4 which runs from Parksville to Tofino and Ucluelet. This portion of the trip takes around 3 hours without breaks. We stopped for a washroom break in Port Alberni. A highlight of the drive was some students seeing a roadside Black Bear in Pacific Rim National Park. Once in Tofino, we checked into our hostel (Whalers on the Point Guesthouse) and then dispersed to buy groceries for the next morning as well as other meals during our trip. This hostel has a nice shared kitchen and most students purchased groceries and cooked rather than paying for restaurants for every meal. Many of the group later met on the public First Street Dock in Tofino to enjoy a gorgeous sunset on the first night there. The Whalers on the Point Hostel makes for a perfect home base during a trip to Tofino for large or small groups. The location is within walking distance of almost everything in Tofino and they are fantastic to work with. The shared kitchen, dining, area, and washrooms/showers are perfect for a group our size. The photos below are in or around the Whalers on the Point Hostel in Tofino.

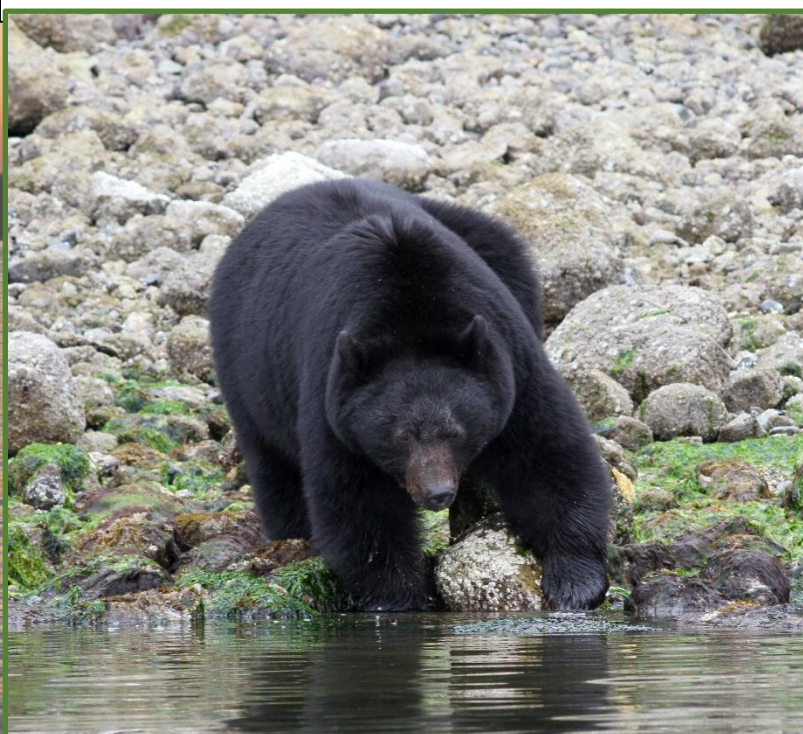


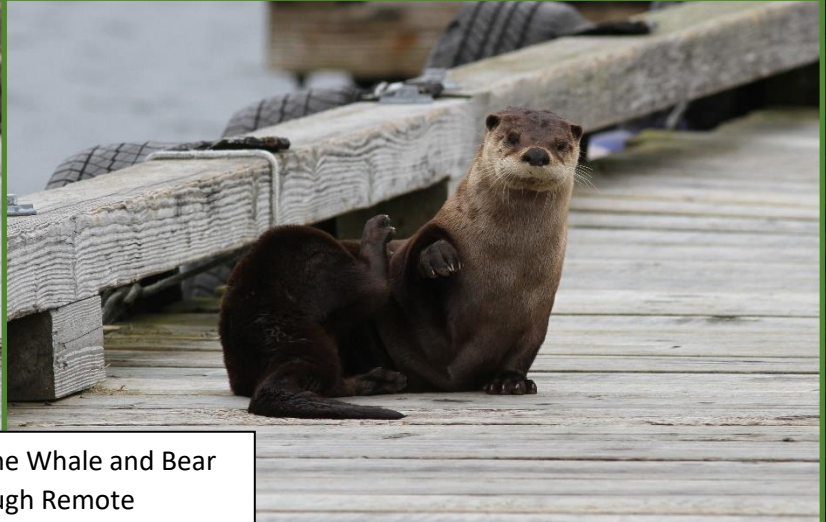
Due to a very rainy forecast for April 24, we decided to do both our whale and bear watching tours on April 23. Usually, we would do one on each day to space them out. This was based on a suggestion from Remote Passages, our tour operator that we used on this and every trip to Tofino. This operator knows the area extremely well and offers open air zodiac and closed cabin vessels. This suggestion turned out to be the perfect plan as we experienced horizontal rainfall for a large part of the next day, and it would have been a nasty time out on the ocean. During both 2-4 hour tours on April 23, it only rained a few drops. We first went whale watching on the open ocean from 8:30-11:30 and then bear watching on the flat inland channels from roughly 12:00-2:30. We were served tea and crackers between the tours. The wildlife seen on both tours rivals any wildlife destination worldwide.



Photos below of the wildlife seen on the tours through Remote Passages:

Black Bears, Steller Sea Lions, River Otters, Sea Otters, Gray Whales, Harbour Seals, various sea birds, etc...





Wildlife seen on the Whale and Bear Watch Tours through Remote Passages Marine Excursions in Tofino on April 23, 2022.



In order to maximize our time outdoors before the predicted rain coming on the next day, we decided to have a short break for food after our Remote Passages excursions and then head straight to one of the beaches that Tofino is known for. Some of the students were determined to wade into the Pacific Ocean so we went to a beach that provided sand for that and rock areas to entertain others. Photos from the Mackenzie Beach area below.





The next day we awoke to the forecasted rain. It rained heavily for the majority of the day. We were relieved that we had done the larger outdoor activities the day before. Meeting at the bus at 9:00, we headed south to Ucluelet to visit the aquarium there. This aquarium is a catch-and-release aquarium, getting new species each year and letting them go after the summer season. It is well worth the visit and a great cause to support. After the aquarium we had lunch in Ucluelet and then headed back north with stops at the Rainforest Hiking loop trails and Long Beach. The forested canopy kept back some of the rain on the hike but Long Beach was the definition of horizontal rainfall. Many of the students still enjoyed the experience of walking on this huge and beautiful beach.









We left our hostel at 7:00 am April 25 in order to get through some road construction and be able to make two brief stops before boarding the ferry. One was at Cathedral Grove (home to giant Douglas Fir trees) and one was at Coombs (a fabulous tourist trap near Parksville). We stopped at both and rolled into the ferry terminal exactly an hour before our scheduled sailing. Once again, our ferry was on time, and we were soon back on the mainland and driving to Kamloops. A great trip with some great people!



### My favourite moment on the trip:

Ilja Angelkoski – The rain and wind going right into our faces on Long Beach and the waves washing over our shoes. It was really fun and you felt free.

Michael Bank – When Ruben dropped his burger while walking back from a restaurant. He was so depressed.

Lotta Armatys – The Sunset on the first night and the Whale watching. I like whale watching more than bear watching because the waves were bigger.

Chiara Bertini – Jumping into the Pacific Ocean after climbing on the rocks on the island.

Paolo Colombo – The nap I took on the boat. It was the best nap I've ever had in my life. When we saw the sea otter that was clapping at us and was so close.

Frederick Tress – Long beach in the rain. I liked the rain and the waves, no people, very nice atmosphere.

Aurora Morello – Climbing on the beach rocks and running into the ocean afterwards.

David Suess – At the beach on the second day after hiking (Long Beach in the rain) because it was fun to dance and run around in the rain. We were wet already so did not care.

Yui Fukutomi – Bear watching because I've never seen a wild bear and had never been on a boat before.

Yume Endo – Walking in the rainforest because I've been to many places in Japan but have never walked in such a beautiful place.

David Nolte – Whale watching because we sat in the front of the zodiac and it was like a roller coaster – so much fun. Also swimming in the ocean. Cold, but a new experience.

Lasse Saur – The rainforest hike and whale and bear watching because I've never seen such big trees or bears before.

David Tsai – The ferry, bear and whale watching on boats because I have never felt that much wind in my life.

Yasmin Daher Kozak – Bear Watching because the view was so beautiful. Not just the bears, but the water, the landscape. I've never seen something so beautiful in my life.

James Ko – Whale and bear watching because I've never been on a boat in the ocean before.

Julius Metzler – The rainforest hike because I didn't know there were rainforests in Canada.

Niklas Schilling – Whale watching on a boat (travelling fast). We saw so many animals on the ocean. Going into the Pacific Ocean for the first time. Also, the rainforest walk.

Chisato Kunihiro – Walking in the forest because it was very beautiful.

Nikolas van Heukelom – Bear Watching.

Mattia Piccinini – When we ran into and swam in the Pacific Ocean because I felt very free in that moment.

Ruben Bretschger – When Michael fell into a puddle and when Korbi and I did a hike near the beach.

Korbinian Stuffer – Hiking in the rainforest because I liked the plants and trees there.

Niklas Pachmann – Seeing the Gray Whale and swimming in the Pacific Ocean. Also, the rainforest.

Yui Okada – Watching whales because I've never seen whales before.

Alina Angelkoski – The beaches (both days) because I could swim in the Pacific Ocean and the rain and sea together was a nice combo. It was really fun.

Ayaka Nishimura – When we went to Long Beach because I've never seen such a big beach and I've never been on a beach in the rain.

Philip Kuehne – Whale watching. Riding out on the boat and seeing those beautiful animals. I also like the hike in the rainforest because I had never been to a rainforest before.

Anne Loschelder – The ferries because it was fun in the wind at the front. Also the sunset on the dock in Tofino the first night.

Henri Schmidt-Ross – Whale watching and the hike in the rainforest. I also really enjoyed swimming the Pacific Ocean.

Mischa Huber – Seeing all the wildlife especially the adorable otters.

### One thing I learned on this trip:

Ilja Angelkoski – Crabs in the aquarium have a very nice life, only eating and resting. Very relaxing for them.

Michael Bank – There are only 20,000 Gray Whales in the world.

Lotta Armatys – Sea Otters have 1 million hairs in a square inch of their fur.

Chiara Bertini – Harbour Seals don't actually know what colour they are so sometimes they are not able to hide from Killer Whales. Even if they knew it, sometimes they change colours as they get older. If I were an animal, I would be a black bear.

Paolo Colombo – When we were talking with the guys on the boat while bear watching. They showed us fish farms and they told us that they are Atlantic Salmon that can carry diseases and threaten the ecosystem there.

Frederick Tress – We should have planned a bit better ahead with our food purchases. We did not have lunch one day.

Aurora Morello – Black bears are super lazy and the ones that hunt you are Polar Bears. They are the cute ones, that's not fair!

David Suess – Gray Whales never fully come out of the water, they don't usually jump.

Yui Fukutomi – There are many beautiful places in the world.

Yume Endo – Nature is beautiful.

David Nolte – Whales can migrate. Bears eat 500 calories every day and eat crabs on beaches.

Lasse Saur – Salmon influence trees. This is one of the reasons why trees are so big around Tofino.

David Tsai – I thought all of Canada was just like Kamloops but Tofino was not. Rain, rain, and more rain.

Yasmin Daher Kozak – Life is too short to worry about rain. Go outside even if it's raining. You will have much more fun going out and getting wet than staying in the hostel and doing nothing.

James Ko – How to properly relax myself.

Julius Metzler – I was shocked that male bears can kill cubs in order to expand their own genetics.

Niklas Schilling – If you don't destroy nature it can be something very beautiful.

Chisato Kunihiro – You don't have to bring an umbrella if you have a waterproof coat.

Nikolas van Heukelom – Life is too short to worry about everything.

Mattia Piccinini – You can fit 13 people in a tree in Pacific Rim National Park.

Ruben Bretschger – Sea stars do not have blood, they have water circulating in their bodies.

Korbinian Stuffer – Gray Whales migrate from Mexico to Alaska.

Niklas Pachmann – Bears can smell that it is low tide so they go to the beaches and find crabs.

Yui Okada – I can expand my world and I made beautiful memories in Tofino.

Alina Angelkoski – Bears can smell better than dogs.

Ayaka Nishimura – Tofino is beautiful!

Philip Kuehne – There are only 20,000 Gray Whales in the world

Anne Loschelder – I want to have a Black Bear as a pet.

Henri Schmidt-Ross – Orca eat 27 salmon a day. When one tree dies, new trees grow out of the dead tree.

Mischa Huber – Sea Otters keep their favourite rocks that they use for cracking open mollusks and clams in a pocket under their arm.