

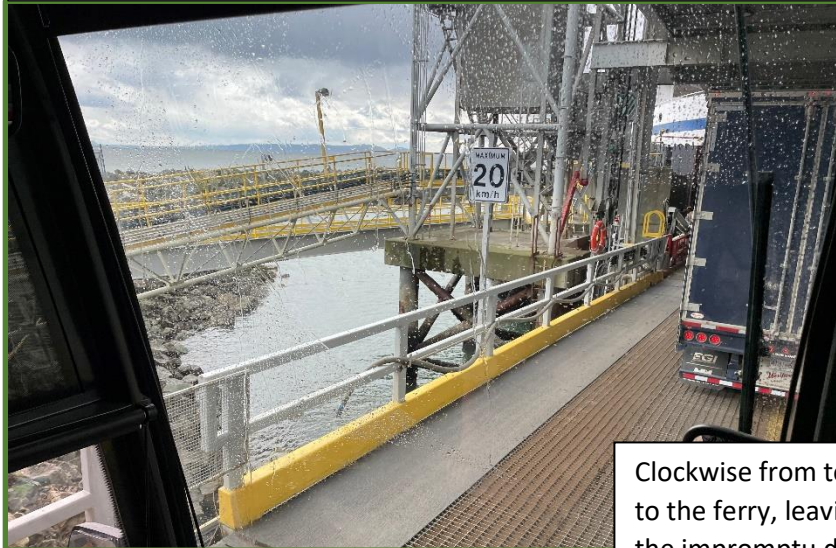
# TOFINO TRIP APRIL 8-11, 2022 TRIP REPORT SD 73 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM



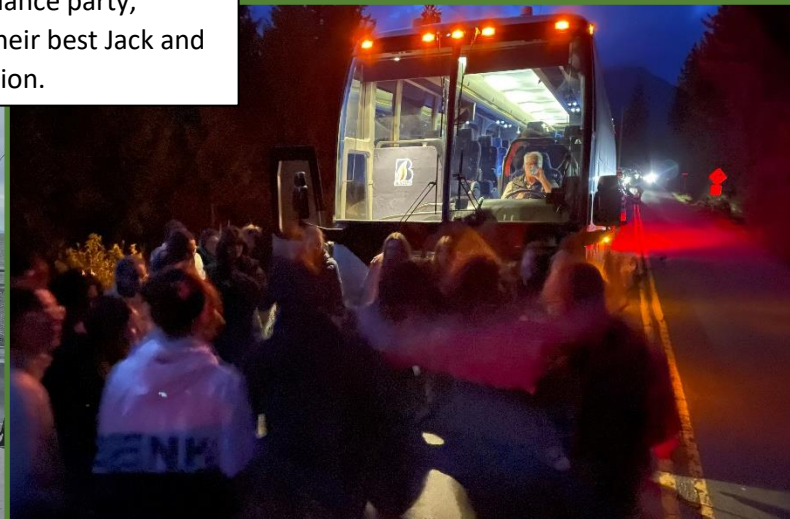


This bus change ended with us having the Kamloops Blazers bus!

On April 8 at 7am, 30 students and 5 chaperones from the SD 73 International Student Program left Kamloops and headed toward Tofino. This would be an eventful day but eventually we would end up at our destination. All was going well until a warning light on our bus turned on slightly before reaching Merritt. We pulled off the highway and waited for a replacement bus coming from Kamloops. This wait resulted in us arriving at Tsawwassen late and seeing our ferry pulling away from the dock...the ferry that we had a reserved spot on. We scrambled and were fortunately able to reserve a place on the next ferry leaving 2.5 hours later. We spent the time exploring around the ferry terminal inside and outside. Eventually we drove on to the next ferry and sailed over to Nanaimo on Vancouver Island. From Nanaimo, it was supposed to be a drive of just under 3 hours, but we had to wait behind road construction for another hour! No worries, we spent the time waiting and eventually what can only be described as an impromptu international dance party developed on the road 😊. Again and again on this trip, transportation issues brought out the best in the students and all seemed cheery despite the unplanned circumstances. Some even reflected on the way home that these times of waiting were thoroughly enjoyed. Regardless of which bus we were on, it was a comfortable ride to Tofino and back!

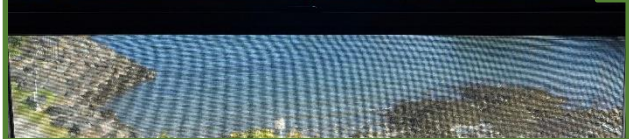


Clockwise from top left: pulling on to the ferry, leaving Tsawwassen, the impromptu dance party, students doing their best Jack and Rose impersonation.





Morning dishes and the view from in and around our hostel



Our first organized activity was not until 1:00pm on April 9 so we had the morning to get settled in and explore the places near our hostel which was located right in the main village area of Tofino. Students bought food and explored the seashore areas included the main pubic dock. We met at 12:45 and walked to Remote Passages, our main tour operator for the bear and whale watching portions of our trip. Something needs to be said here about the weather forecasted and experienced. We were planning for never ending rain and powerful wind. In the end, it only rained for one of our activities and we enjoyed gorgeous sunshine and mild temperatures for our time on the west coast of Vancouver Island.



Looking great in our red floating suits!





**Bear Watching with Remote Passages April 9, 2022**





Enjoying tea after our bear watching tour.



After bear watching some of us did two short hikes in Pacific Rim National Park among the giant Western Red Cedar trees there. It rained during this portion of the trip, but we were dressed for it. How many students can you fit inside a tree?



Clayoquot Sound (where Tofino is located) is very rich in wildlife. During this trip, we were honoured to experience this by boat, bus, and on foot. On April 10, we were treated to a whale watching trip through Remote Passages. On this trip, we did encounter Gray Whales, but much more as well. It was such a thrill to be out on the open Pacific Ocean and the calmer inland water taking in such a bounty of wildlife! All the photos below were taken on this expedition which lasted from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm. Clockwise from the top left: Steller Sea Lions, Red-necked Grebe, Sea Otter, Steller Sea Lions, Pelagic and Brandt's Cormorants, Pigeon Guillemot, Sea Otter, Gray Whale, Black Oystercatcher (middle)





People pictures from the whale watching tour. We were very fortunate with the weather and the fact that no one got terribly sea-sick despite some really tall rolling waves out on the open ocean. Strong stomachs all around!





After whale watching we had enough time and more gorgeous weather to head to South Beach for some tidal pooling and beach time. Some students braved the cold Pacific Ocean and ran into the water, some walked around in bare feet, others climbed rocks, and all enjoyed time on a beautiful stretch of coast on the west side of Vancouver Island.



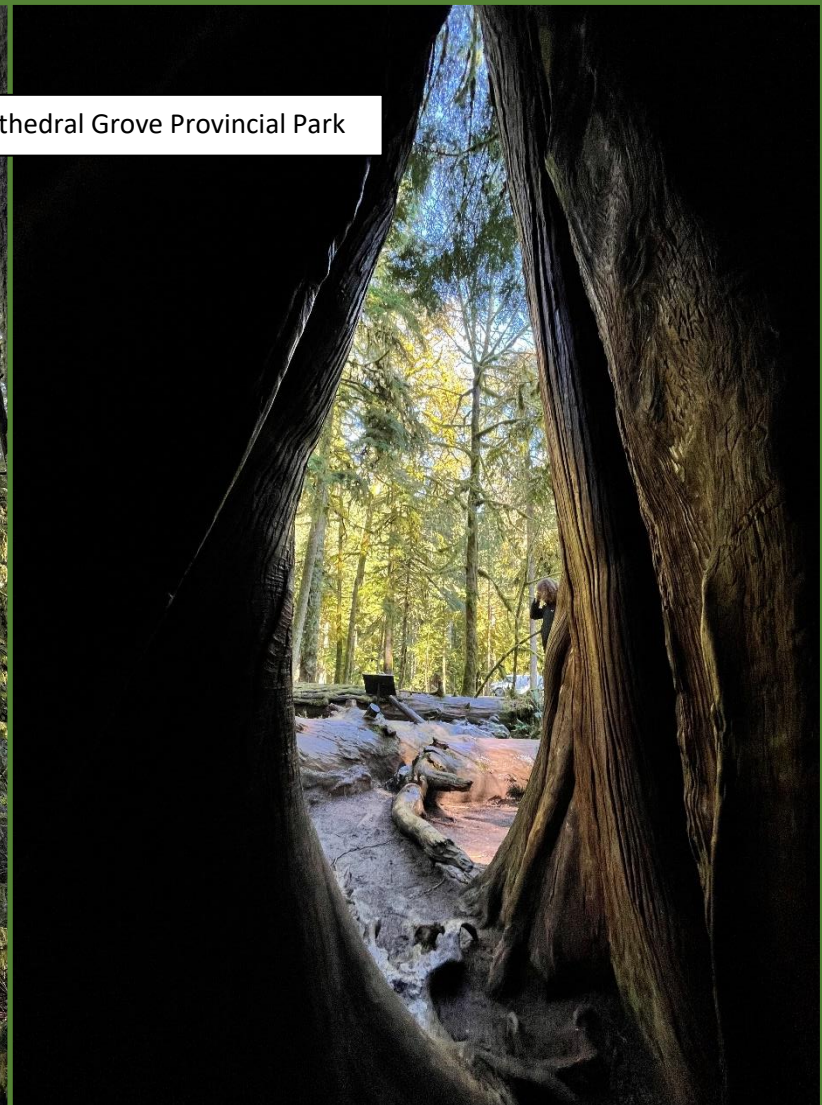
On April 11 we left the hostel at 7:00 am and said our goodbyes to Tofino. We timed the construction perfectly and had enough time for two quick stops on the way to our return ferry at Nanaimo. These two stops were Cathedral Grove Provincial Park and Coombs (a place not possible to describe in a few sentences...you'll need to google it). We were quite proud of making good time and arriving a full hour before our reserved ferry only to find out our ship had mechanical trouble and was eventually cancelled... Four hours later we were on the next ferry and sailed back to the mainland, arriving in Kamloops at 11:30 pm. Never bank on ferry time! I was so impressed with how the students passed the time and remained positive.



The road construction just east of Tofino. A bit of snow had fallen the days before just east of Tofino

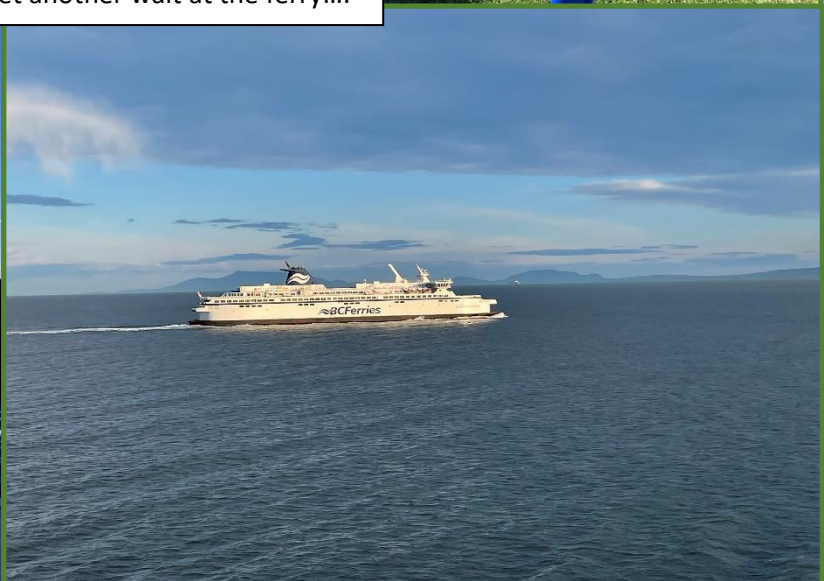
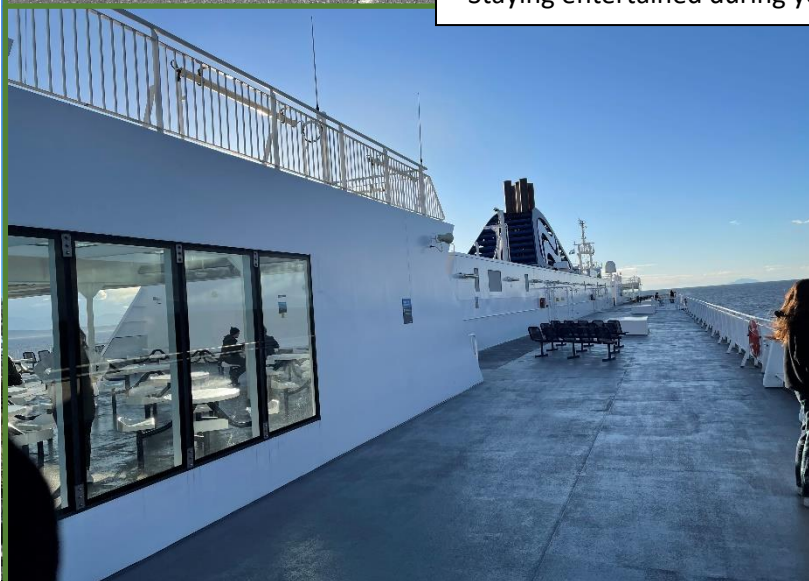


Giant Douglas Fir trees at cathedral Grove Provincial Park

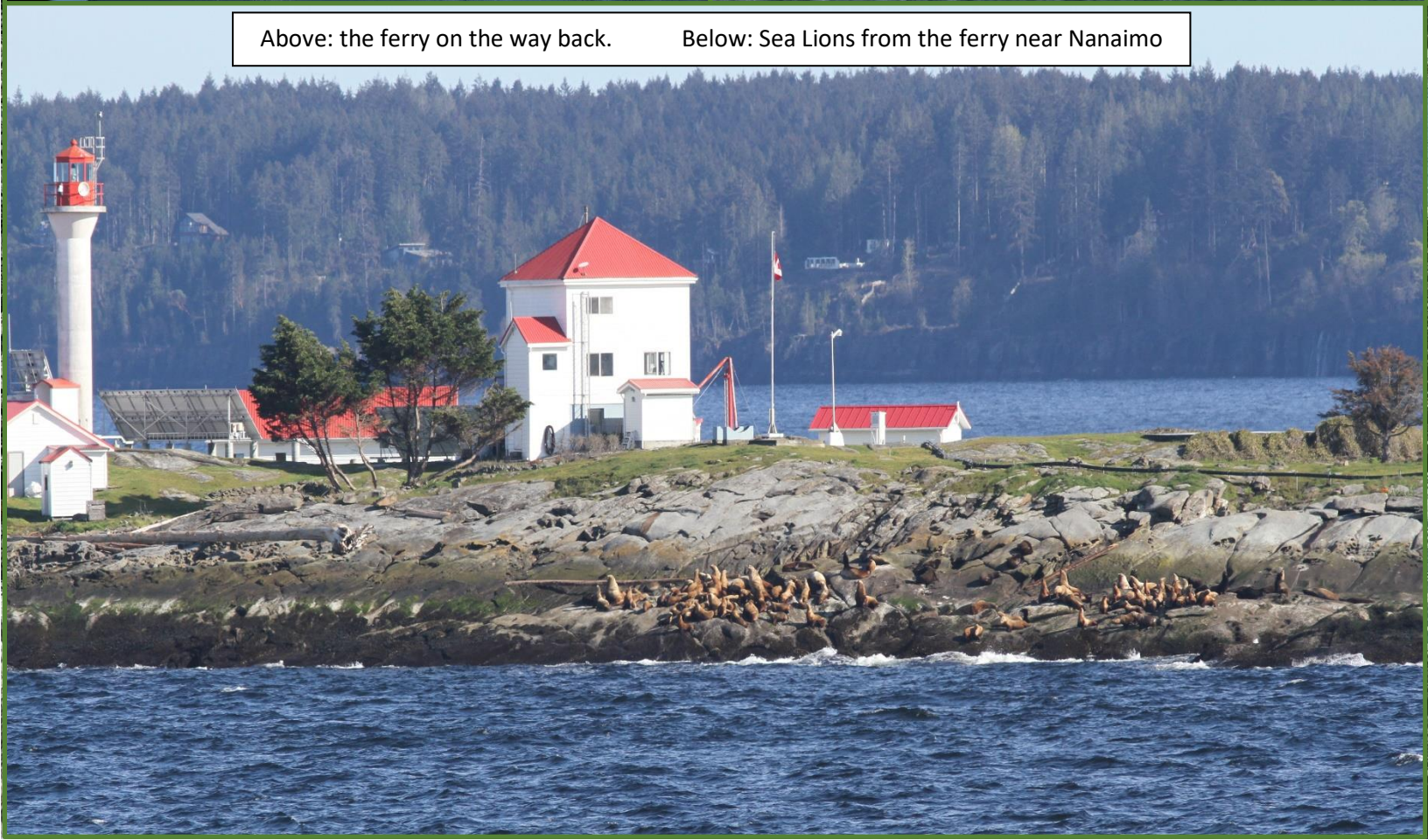




Staying entertained during yet another wait at the ferry....



Above: the ferry on the way back. Below: Sea Lions from the ferry near Nanaimo



### Favourite Moment of the trip

Clarissa: Seeing the back of the whales and the swimming sea lion right beside our boat.

Guglielmo: Seeing whales and bears.

Alva: Whale and bear watching because you are near real wildlife in real nature and not in a zoo.

Lina: Walking the rainforest trail in the rain.

Fedra: Running into the ocean.

Tabitha: Climbing the big rocks on the beach and walking around Tofino with my friends and going into the little shops.

Ruben: Being near the islands with all the wildlife (sea lions and eagles) during whale watching – real nature

Emilia: Running into the ocean.

Gloria: When everyone was tired and we got off the bus with the music box. That moment became the best moment.

Sacha: The hikes – to see the awesome forest. I loved every moment of the trip.

Mika: Running into the ocean.

Rebecca: The party on and off of the bus at the construction delay the first night.

Soizic: The hikes in the rainforest because I really liked the big trees and the big mountains.

Greta: Running towards the ocean on a beach with my friends, not caring about the temperature, appearance, or anything else.

Roberta: Singing in and out of the bus while at the construction delay.

Giulio: Whale watching because it felt like being in a documentary.

Francesco: Singing at the hostel.

Katharina: Running into the Pacific Ocean.

Florenzia: The hikes we did in the rainforest. Falling for trees and getting in the trees.

Adrien: Bear watching, the islands nearby, and also the hikes.

Christina: Hanging out at the beach, laying out in the sun, and running into the water.

Vieri: The quick swim in the ocean was very exciting. The water was so cold!

Amelie: Seeing the whales.

Eva: Both hikes in the forests of giant trees and being on a boat in the ocean.

Matteo: When we cooked all together in the kitchen, enjoying the moment and working together to create a deeper connection. Working as a group.

Luisa: Hanging out on the beach because we don't have a beach where I'm from.

Theo: Discovering the wildlife – bears and whales.

Leni: Running into the ocean while screaming and being on the beach.

Alienor: Both hikes in the forest, they were amazing.

Lotte: Cooking and eating together at the hostel.



Orange-crowned Warbler near the beach



Anna's Hummingbird while waiting for the ferry

## One thing I learned from the trip

Clarissa: There are no Grizzly Bears on Vancouver Island.

Guglielmo: To try to preserve nature because it is very beautiful and interesting.

Alva: To make the best out of every situation (referring to bus and ferry trouble on the way there).

Lina: The trip fee was worth it.

Fedra: To take advantage of opportunities because if you don't, you may miss out on an opportunity.

Tabitha: The difference between old growth and second growth forest. Native people showed the white people how to hunt otters so they could trade them and that's why the otters almost went extinct.

Ruben: To take opportunities to discover new things even if it means waking up early.

Emilia: Even in the worst situation (delayed ferry) things can turn out so good with the right people.

Gloria: In life we should do everything if we have the possibility. We won't always know how things will turn out but this does not mean that we won't like them.

Sacha: About the indigenous population, especially in the islands around Tofino.

Mika: Sea Lions have the same colour but they look different because some are wet and some are not. Also, Sea Lions stink. People are really friendly in Tofino.

Rebecca: When you want to give up, if you know that if you have good company, you can do anything.

Soizic: A trip is always better if you have good friends to enjoy it with.

Greta: It's not about the place and situation, it's about the people you are with, and the energy that you transmit to each other.

Roberta: The best moments are the ones that are spontaneous and happen when you think everything is going down/bad.

Giulio: Choosing Canada was worth it.

Francesco: To try to enjoy the moment.

Katharina: How beautiful BC is and to value the time you have with your friends.

Florencia: The First Nations when we went whale watching. How they traded salmon for things they didn't have. How interconnected every group was with other groups. Always bring someone who speaks your native language on trips (only Spanish speaker on the trip.)

Adrien: About the wildlife and how they live and the history of the region.

Christina: We have to be grateful for the opportunities given to us and that the world can look so different even if it is in the same country.

Vieri: We normally live in a small box but we don't realize that the real world is enormous. We just know a little part.

Amelie: To enjoy the good moments – like walking on a beach barefoot.

Eva: To put my phone away and live in the moment with my friends and discover nature.

Matteo: I have never really experienced nature. I have always enjoyed visiting cities, ancient architecture, etc... There are lots of things in nature that are beautiful. This trip helped me to connect with nature.

Luisa: There is basically a history behind everything (seals, otters, and whales) Life is really expensive and we should appreciate more what our parents do for us.

Theo: How fragile wildlife is: example, the Gray Whale migration.

Leni: It's important to spend time with your friends to get closer and build a friendship.

Alienor: I realize that the distances are so huge in Canada.

Lotte: You sometimes have to get out of your comfort zone to enjoy things that you like and you will appreciate that afterwards.

**Tour company used for Bear and Whale Watching tours:** Remote Passages <https://www.remotepassages.com/>

Knowledgeable, very experienced, local, super friendly/easy to deal with, capable of handling a large group like ours (35 people).

**Accommodations:** HI-TOFINO Whalers on the Point Guesthouse. Fantastic location for being able to walk most places, capable of handling a large group such as ours (35 people), super easy to deal with, excellent shared kitchen and dining area, bus parking can be arranged, flexible, clean, great atmosphere, right on the water with lots of places to stroll nearby.

<http://tofinohostel.com>