

BOOK #006

The Smart Traveler's Alaska Wildlife Guide

Chapter 8 — Seasonal Wildlife Guide

Imagine visiting Alaska in early summer as humpback whales return to feed, bears gather along salmon streams, and bald eagles soar overhead with nearly endless daylight. Every season offers something unique, and knowing what wildlife is most active during your visit can help you make the most of your Alaska adventure.

Spring (May)

As Alaska awakens from winter, migrating whales begin arriving in coastal waters, bears emerge from hibernation, and many birds return to nest. Fewer crowds and fresh spring scenery make this a wonderful time for wildlife viewing.

Summer (June–August)

Summer is Alaska's peak wildlife season. Humpback whales feed in abundance, bears fish for salmon, sea otters care for their pups, bald eagles are highly active, and mountain goats, moose, and caribou are frequently spotted. Long daylight hours provide more opportunities to observe wildlife throughout the day.

Fall (September)

As temperatures cool, many animals prepare for winter. Bears continue feeding heavily before hibernation, colorful fall foliage creates beautiful photography opportunities, and visitor crowds begin to thin. Whale sightings remain common before migration begins.

Planning Around Wildlife

Different itineraries highlight different species. Glacier Bay, Juneau, Icy Strait Point, Denali National Park, and the Kenai Peninsula each offer unique wildlife experiences depending on the season and location.

Aimee's Insider Tip

There really isn't a bad time to visit Alaska. Every month offers something special. Instead of asking, "What's the best month?" ask yourself, "What wildlife do I most want to see?" Then plan your trip around those experiences.