

# ALASKA SEA ADVENTURES - TRIPS

## SPRING HERRING SPAWN EXTRAVAGANZA!

*You don't want to miss this experiencing first hand one of these once-a-year-spring-only events! It's a photographers dream as an abundance of wildlife gather to feast on the vulnerable herring as they move near shore to lay their eggs.*



*It is not uncommon for us to observe the whales' fascinating cooperative 'bubble-net' feeding behavior up close.*



*The Arctic tern which performs the longest known migration from the breeding grounds in Greenland to Antarctica, feasts on the rich abundance of herring.*



The widely distributed Pacific Herring biomass is an essential resource for the existence of almost all of the marine wildlife and a host of other fauna in the Pacific Northwest that depend on this high-caloric essential nutrient to replenish body reserves exhausted while enduring a long winter. The herring's annual spring spawning event is a celebration of this absolutely vital component of Southeast Alaska's extraordinary natural ecosystem.

Eagles gather by the thousands lining the tress along the shoreline with their majestic white heads. The eagles' keen eyesight and winter-long hunger helps create a more than formidable aerial presence with their continual elegant dives catching herring by the talon full. Seals and Steller sea lions rush through the tremendous schools of herring that ribbon the shallow waters along the shoreline. Humpback whales demonstrate a variety of forage techniques to capture the extremely elusive schools of herring.

And of course, what marine wildlife party in Southeast Alaska would be complete without an appearance of the ocean's top predator, the killer whale. The orca's nomadic travels most definitely include a 'feasting trip' to the buffet presented by the herring's arrival to spawn along beautiful isolated beaches.

Tlingit natives of Southeast Alaska revere and celebrate the herring spawn by placing hemlock branches in the water to collect a thick layer of herring eggs laid on the bows. This produces a highly prized, rich delicacy that is often dipped in seal oil.

Pacific Herring is also a commercially-fished resource. Historically, the herring were caught and rendered for their rich oil or reduced to make fish meal. More recently, uses for commercially caught herring have included a limited food market, bait for other fisheries and food for zoo animals. There is an amazing commercial harvest for the herring for the primary purpose of providing a Japanese delicacy of 'Kazunoko' or herring eggs.

A major herring spawn event occurs in March along the shores of Sitka. This event is one of the largest spring herring spawning occurrences on the west coast of North America. The huge biomass attracts many species of wildlife comprising a spectacle of many thousands of animals that come to feast on the vulnerable rich fish.

Alaska Sea Adventures will feature a special trip to Sitka to observe and photograph this amazing event. Of course, when you join us on our special Spring Wildlife Extravaganza Trips, you'll witness this amazing event up-close-and-personal on Alaska Sea Adventures voyages beginning in late March with our Sitka Sound Trip followed by the Hoonah Sound Trip in April and concluding with the Seymour Canal Trip the first week of May.

*Please see reverse for more excitement!*

## SPRING HERRING SPAWN EXTRAVAGANZA!

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*Eagles display their amazing aerobatic maneuvers to capture prized herring.*



### Spring Spawning, Whales & Photography Schedules

**2012**

**Sitka Sound Herring Spawn - Eagles & Whales**

9 days/8 nights Mar. 27 - Apr. 4

**Hoonah Sound Herring Spawn Event**

8 days/7 nights Apr. 18 - 25

**Seymore Canal Herring Spawn Event**

8 days/7 nights Apr. 27 - May 4

**2013**

**Sitka Sound Herring Spawn - Eagles & Whales**

9 days/8 nights Mar. 27 - Apr. 4

**Hoonah Sound Herring Spawn Event**

8 days/7 nights Apr. 18 - 25

**Seymore Canal Herring Spawn Event**

8 days/7 nights Apr. 27 - May 4