

Discover The Omineca Region

Omineca – meaning slow moving water – is a region of rich wetlands, meandering streams and powerful rivers. It is a spectacular land in any season.

In spring, listen to the siren's song of thawing creeks that lured gold miners to this country. Spend time by a quiet marsh, and you might see moose come to feed on the lush new vegetation. Follow a river and you may travel with the ghosts of Alexander Mackenzie and Simon Fraser, the first explorers to this new land.

As the air grows warm and still, watch as the wetlands come alive with breeding ducks and geese. While waterfowl build their nests and raise their young, watch for majestic white pelicans filling their pouches with fish they have trapped in the shallow, quiet waters of local lakes.

When autumn days draw in, birds fly south along the region's waterways. Travel a river yourself, and you may witness the journey of spawning salmon. Stop by a pond while beavers repair their dam, and you might stand where European fur traders and the Carrier First Nation had their trap lines.

As the air chills and the wetlands and waterways grow silent, turn your attention to the surrounding mountains and forests. Scan a rock face and you may find mountain goats climbing nimbly over broken and treacherous terrain. Follow the region's highways and you will travel through through seemingly endless woodlands – the home of caribou, deer and bears, and the source of a thriving forest industry.

Come once to the Omineca, in any season, and you will be sure to return.

Omineca River PHOTO Province of BC, Ted Zimmerman



Northern Goshawk PHOTO Mikke Strim

More Information

British Columbia Wildlife Watch is a multi-partner program designed to promote educational, recreational and commercial opportunities to view fish and wildlife in their natural habitats. Partners include government, communities and industry who treasure our wildlife heritage and want to protect it for future generations.

Internet Sites

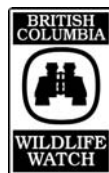
- ▶ Wildlife Viewing in BC wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/fw/wild/wildlife_viewing.htm
- ▶ BC Parks wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/
- ▶ Species at Risk wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/wld/serisk.htm

Associations

- ▶ Federation of British Columbia Naturalists, #307-1367 West Broadway, Vancouver BC V6H 4A9 Tel: 604-737-3057 www.naturalists.bc.ca/
- ▶ Guide Outfitters Association of BC, Box 94675, Richmond, BC V6Y 4A4 Tel: 604-278-2688 www.goabc.org
- ▶ Spruce City Wildlife Association, 1384 River Road, Prince George, BC V2L 5S8 Tel: 250-563-5437 www.scwa.bc.ca/Home/

Publications

- ▶ British Columbia Road and Recreational Atlas, 5th edition, Informat
- ▶ British Columbia Wildlife Viewing Guide, Lone Pine Publishing
- ▶ The B.C. Roadside Naturalist, Greystone Books



Wildlife Viewing



in the Omineca Region

FRONT PANEL: Caribou PHOTO Jared Hobbs | Spruce Grouse (male) PHOTO PhotoCanada.com

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DESIGN www.sagedesign.ca



Viewing Highlights

- ▶ Over 500 Trumpeter Swans winter in the Central Interior/Omineca Plateau.
- ▶ Close to 200 American White Pelicans use various lakes in the region each year.
- ▶ The highest density of moose in North America is found in the Prince George area.
- ▶ The 10 metre high Rearguard Falls mark the end of a phenomenal 1,200 kilometre journey up the Fraser River by spawning Chinook salmon. This is an excellent site to see salmon attempt to jump the cascading falls each autumn. A few salmon are successful and spawn a couple of kilometres upstream.
- ▶ Kennedy Siding provides a rare, car-accessible, opportunity to view caribou in their natural winter habitat.
- ▶ Highway 97 – Pine Pass. This highway corridor from Pine Pass south to Old Friend Creek presents viewing opportunities throughout the year. Moose can be seen year round, bears are often visible from mid-April to September, and the best time to see caribou is between November and April.



Spotted Sandpiper PHOTO Ted Zimmerman

- ▶ Highway 16 – Prince George to Valemount. This scenic drive follows the southern Rocky Mountain Trench and presents an excellent opportunity to view bears and ungulates feeding on roadside vegetation in the spring.

Wildlife Viewing Tips

- ▶ The goal of wildlife viewing is to safely observe wildlife undertaking natural behaviour in their natural habitat.
- ▶ Use field guides to identify wildlife and signs, such as tracks, droppings, and nests.
- ▶ Early mornings and dusk are often best, but experiment with different viewing times. Deer are active in the late afternoon and early evening.
- ▶ Try different viewing strategies. Scan peaks with binoculars. Look for moose and bears in old burned or cleared areas where there is abundant shrub growth. Check for wildlife near lakes and wet areas, their sources of food and cover.



Elk PHOTO Vance Hanna

- ▶ Move slowly and quietly. Avoid wearing bright clothes.
- ▶ Use guides and local knowledge to enhance your viewing experience. Ensure your guide has a permit to conduct commercial wildlife viewing.
- ▶ A diversity of species can be seen along edges between habitats.
- ▶ Be patient and remember there is no guarantee that you will see wildlife. If you do not, simply enjoy the natural beauty of northern B.C.

Responsible Viewing

Respect the Needs of Wildlife

- ▶ Use responsible viewing practices. Avoid harassing wildlife, causing disturbances at feeding areas, damaging critical habitats or causing disturbances at breeding sites, which can leave eggs and young animals vulnerable to predation.
- ▶ While viewing or photographing wildlife, use viewing blinds, natural features or your car to minimize wildlife disturbance. View from a distance and use telephoto lenses, binoculars or spotting scopes. Watch animal behaviour for signs of disturbance or alarm. If this occurs, alter your behaviour.
- ▶ Never feed wildlife. It is unsafe, illegal and often leads to disaster for animals if they continue to seek human food sources.
- ▶ Avoid sensitive habitats (nests, dens, feeding areas) and times when wildlife are particularly vulnerable (denning, feeding, mating, raising young).
- ▶ Keep pets leashed and under control or leave them at home.

Protect the Environment

- ▶ Stay on designated roads, trails and viewing platforms to avoid trampling vegetation, and so wildlife can become accustomed to human movement.
- ▶ Practice “no trace” viewing. Do not take plants, rocks, flowers or fossils as souvenirs. Please take your garbage with you or use appropriate facilities if they are provided.

Stay Safe

- ▶ Do not approach, chase or touch wild animals. They are unpredictable and potentially dangerous.
- ▶ Bears can be seen throughout the region. Learn how to be safe in bear country. Information is available at wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/wld/pub/bearwld.htm
- ▶ Find out about hunting seasons in the areas you visit at wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/fw/wild/synopsis.htm.
- ▶ Wildlife may unexpectedly cross roads. Obey traffic speed limits to help avoid collisions.
- ▶ If using industrial roads, enquire about safe travel times and yield to heavy equipment.

Respect Others

- ▶ Be respectful of the rights of private property owners. Ask permission to cross private property and be sure to leave gates as you find them.
- ▶ Share the view with others trying to watch wildlife.
- ▶ You will likely encounter others undertaking industrial, commercial or other recreational activities. Please be aware and considerate of their activities.

Report all Poachers and Polluters

- ▶ There are laws to protect wildlife from harassment and disturbance. If you see something inappropriate, document the details and report it to the nearest conservation officer, local authority, or call: 1-877-952-7277.

Chinook, Rearguard Falls PHOTO BC Parks





Moose PHOTO Jared Hobbs

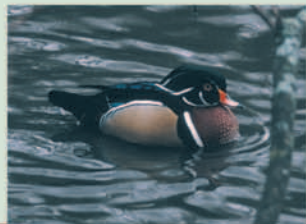
Kokanee PHOTO Vance Hanna



Dahl Lake Park PHOTO BC Parks



Wood Duck PHOTO PhotoCanada.com



Mountain Goat PHOTO Province of BC, D.F. Fraser



Pelican PHOTO Province of BC, Tom Hall



Mule Deer PHOTO Province of BC, Tom Hall



Map #	Location Name	Access	Highlights	Deer	Moose	Mtn. Goat	Caribou	Elk	Carnivores	Raptors	Waterfowl	Shorebirds	Songbirds	Grouse/ Ptarmigan	Fish	Beaver	Muskrat	Other	Facilities
1	Beaumont Park	B P	wintering trumpeter swans								F-S					Sp-S			C D T
2	Bednesti Marsh	P	waterfowl, beavers, songbirds								Sp-S		Sp-S			Sp-S	Sp-S		R
3	Camp Creek	P	kokanee spawning, moose, waterfowl	F-W	Yr						Sp-S	S			S-F				
4	Carp Lake Park	G W	bear, moose, waterfowl, loons	Yr	Yr				Yr		Sp-F		Sp-F	Sp-F	S-F	Sp-F			C D T
5	Cottonwood Island Park	P	songbirds, woodpeckers, waterfowl								Yr	Yr	Sp-F			Sp-S	Sp-S		D T
6	Cranberry Marsh/Starratt Wildlife Sanct.	P	excellent waterfowl viewing, moose		Sp-S					Sp-S	Sp-S	Sp-S	Sp-S	Sp-F			Sp-S		D T V
7	Cranbrook Hill Greenway	G P W	moose, fox	Yr	Yr				Yr				Sp-F	Sp-F					T
8	Crooked River	B P	wintering trumpeter swans, moose		F-Sp				Yr		F-Sp	Sp-F	Sp-F			Sp-F	Sp-F		
9	Dahl Lake Park	B G	riparian wildlife, waterfowl, raptors	Yr	Yr					Sp-F	Sp-F		Sp-F			Sp-F			D T
10	Eaglet Lake	P	waterfowl viewing						Sp-S		Sp-F					Sp-S	Sp-S		D T
11	Eskers Park	G P W	wetland habitat amongst eskers, moose, deer	Yr	F-Sp					Sp-S	Sp-S	Sp-S	Sp-S	Sp-S	Yr	Sp-F	Sp-F		D T V
12	Ferguson Lake	G W	marsh and riparian habitats	Yr	Yr					F-Sp	Sp-S	Sp-S	Sp-S	Yr		Sp-S	Sp-F	frogs Sp-S	D T V
13	Forests for the World Interpretive Forest	G P W	varied forest and aquatic habitats, moose	Yr	Yr					Sp-S	Sp-S	Sp-S	Sp-S	Yr		Sp-S		frogs Sp-S	D T V
14	Horseshoe Lake	P	waterfowl viewing								Sp-S		Sp				Sp-S		V
15	Hudson's Bay Slough	P W	waterfowl viewing								Sp-S	Sp-S	Sp-F			Sp-S	Sp-S	spotted frogs Sp-S	D T
16	Kakwa Park	F W	wilderness/mountain wildlife	Yr	Yr	Yr	Yr		Yr		Sp-S					Sp-S			C T
17	Kennedy Siding	G	car accessible caribou viewing	Yr	Yr		F-W												V
18	McMillan Regional Park	P W	mixed forest birds, city views							Yr			Sp-S						D T V
19	Morkill River	G	spawning salmon	W-S	F-W			F							S				
20	Mount Robson Park	B P W	spectacular settings	Yr	Yr	Yr		Sp-F	Yr	Yr	Sp-F		Sp-S	Sp-S		Sp-F		pika, hoary marmot S	C D T V
21	Mugaha Marsh	G	bird banding observatory								Sp-F	Sp-F	Sp-F						V O
22	Nautley River	G P	wintering trumpeter swans								Yr					S-F	S-F		
23	Nechako River Migratory Bird Sanct.	P	spring and fall Canada geese viewing								Sp-F	Sp-F	Sp-F						D V
24	Nulki/Tachick Lakes	B G	white pelican (S), trumpeter swans (F)	F-W	Yr					Sp-F	Sp-F	Sp-F	Sp-F						L
25	Neilsen Lake	G	waterfowl viewing								Sp-F	Sp-S	Sp-F			Sp-F	Sp-F		V
26	Purden Lake Park	B P W	spawning rainbow trout		Yr				Yr	Yr	Sp-F		Sp-F	Sp-F	Sp	Sp-F			C D T V
27	Rearguard Falls	P	spawning chinook salmon, waterfalls												S				D T V
28	Shelley Oxbow	G W	waterfowl viewing, riparian birds		Yr						Sp-F	Sp-F	Sp-F			Sp-F			
29	Stellako River	P	trumpeter swans (W), rainbow trout, sockeye salmon	Yr	Yr				Yr	Sp-F	Yr	Sp-F	Sp-F		S+F				L T
30	Stuart River	G P	trumpeter swans (W), chinook & sockeye salmon		Yr			Yr			W-S	Sp-F	Sp-F		S				
31	Swift Creek Spawning Channel	P W	spawning chinook salmon												S				D T V
32	Tabor Lake and Marsh	G	waterfowl viewing, riparian birds	F-W	Yr					Yr	Sp-F	Sp-F	Sp-F			Sp-S		river otter Yr	
33	Tabor Mountain - Grove Burn	P W	moose		F-S				Yr				Sp-S	Sp-S					R T V
34	Tatlatui Park	F	wilderness setting, mountain goat, caribou		Yr	Yr	Yr		Yr						Yr	Sp-S		stone sheep Yr	L
35	West Lake Park	P	migrating trumpeter swans, waterfowl		F-S					Sp	Sp-F	Sp-F	Sp	Sp-F		Sp-S			D T
36	Wilkins Regional Park	G W	bird viewing	Yr	Yr					Sp-F	Yr	Sp-F	Sp-F	Yr				other birds Yr	D T

KEY – ACCESS B – Boat F – Fly G – Gravel 2 wheel drive road H – Horse P – Highway/paved W – Walk/hike

SEASONS Sp – Spring (late March - late June) S – Summer (late June - late Sept) F – Fall (late Sept - late Dec) W – Winter (late Dec - late March) Yr – Year round (Note: viewing seasons are affected by weather patterns which vary annually)

FACILITIES C – Camping D – Day use L – Lodge R – Highway rest stop T – Trails V – Viewing blinds/platforms/info O – Other NOTE Carnivores include wolf, coyote, fox