

All about B.C. Salmon

Salmon is an **essential resource** for many First Nations peoples and communities in B.C. For thousands of years, First Nations peoples have cultivated deep knowledge of salmon and its **interconnectedness** with other living things.

There are **five main species** of Salmon found in B.C. rivers and oceans – Chinook, Sockeye, Coho, Pink, and Chum.

In 2023, around **50 million kg** of farmed salmon and over **8 million kg** of wild commercial salmon were harvested in B.C.



Did you know? Salmon may **leap up to 2m** over waterfalls and cut through churning rapids to reach their home waters again!

Salmon is rich in **omega-3 fatty acids**, which support brain and heart health.

First Nations peoples in B.C. fish salmon in many ways. One traditional method is **dip netting** – standing on projecting rocks or platforms above rivers, catching salmon in nets that are attached to long poles.



Salmon are born in freshwater rivers and then travel to the ocean. They will live there for 1-6 years before they **travel up to 3,200 kms** back to where they hatched in order to spawn.

After spawning, most adult Pacific salmon will die. Their bodies then become an important **source of nutrients** and food in coastal ecosystems, including for bears and plants!



"I remember being four years old, getting my first traditional cutting knife and being with my great grandparents learning how to cut fish.

Working in this job field, there are good opportunities to **create sustainability in tradition** and to take a look at the past to create a better future."
– *Lena, salmon project manager, B.C.*



British Columbia is home to 203 First Nations, whose traditional territories span the province. Many communities living along the coast and rivers have their own words for each type of salmon.

Lena grew up in Haida Gwaii, where the Haida people speak **X̱aad Kil/X̱aayda Kil**. The word for a common salmon is **sgwaagan** or **t'siín**.

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