

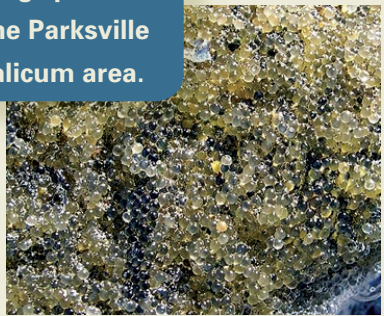
A Wildlife Spectacle

In Spring, another wildlife spectacle coincides with the arrival of the Brant geese: the Pacific herring spawn. This abundant food source attracts tens of thousands of water birds and marine mammals to beaches and bays in Parksville/Qualicum Beach.



Brant feeding on herring roe

In 2006
approx. 20,000
tonnes of
herring spawned
in the Parksville
Qualicum area.



Herring Roe

Pacific herring lay their eggs on seaweed such as eelgrass. The spawning of millions of herring turns the colour of the water a turquoise hue and the surf turns foamy white as it breaks onto the beaches.

The herring eggs are an important source of protein and lipids for Brant as they put on fat to complete their journey to the northern breeding grounds.

For more information on the Black Brant Goose and the Parksville Qualicum Beach Wildlife Management Area please contact the Ministry of Environment at 250-751-3100.

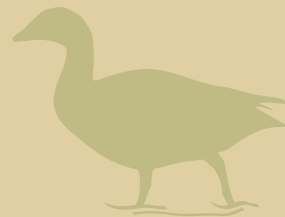
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BLACK BRANT GOOSE CONSERVATION



Along the shores of
Parksville & Qualicum Beach

Being a Brant isn't easy. There is a great deal of travel involved...

good meals and a place to rest are hard to find...

and things aren't getting any easier.

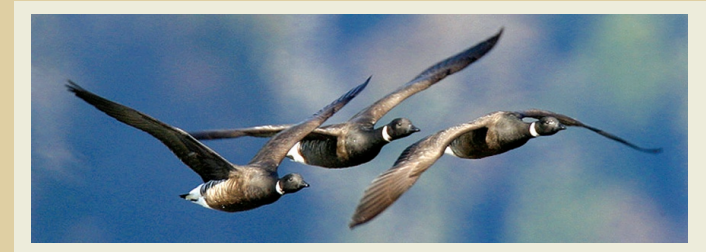
The Black Brant geese you see along the shores of Parksville/Qualicum Beach are on a remarkable journey of migration from California and Mexico to their northern breeding grounds.

On this northward migration, Brant geese rely heavily on coastal estuaries, beaches, bays and spits like those found along the shores of Parksville/Qualicum Beach to feed and rest.

The habitats found along the shores of Parksville/Qualicum Beach provide an abundant food source. Brant geese arrive thin, tired and hungry. Most have only a few days to gain weight and strength before making another non-stop flight to their northern breeding grounds.

In Parksville/Qualicum Beach alone, over 20,000 Brant will stop on their journey to their breeding grounds.

Rapid population growth in Parksville/Qualicum Beach is cause for concern because of the potential for increased disturbance. A disturbance caused by something as simple as a child running on the beach can have drastic effects on Brant geese when feeding.



The global population of Pacific Black Brant is estimated to be only 150,000 birds.

Brant spend up to 70% of their day feeding.

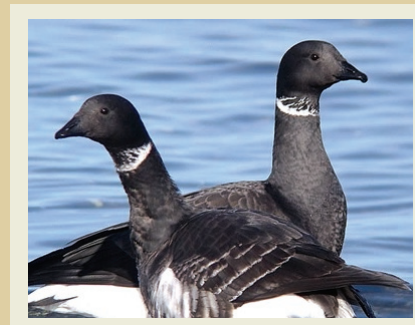
Brant spend their nights out on the Strait of Georgia. As the tide begins to drop, the Brant fly in-shore to land on the first exposed sandbars. The Brant follow the tide out, feeding as they go on their primary foods – eelgrass, sea lettuce and nutrient rich herring roe.

By the end of April, most Brant have left to continue their journey northward.

How can you help?

To limit disturbance to migratory Brant geese and other wildlife, BC Ministry of Environment has seasonal "no dog" restrictions in place at Parksville Bay, Columbia Beach and the Little Qualicum Estuary.

Please do your part by observing the signs posted in these sensitive locations. Failure to do so may result in substantial fines.



Brant geese have been known to make their Southern trip in just 20 hours!

PRIMARY BRANT FEEDING AREAS

