Coho Salmon

Silver Salmon | *Oncorhynchus kisutch (Walbaum, 1792)*



THE FOREST-STREAM HOMECOMING

The autumn return

When autumn rains swell British Columbia's forest creeks, Coho Salmon return from the Pacific to spawn. Their silver sides deepen to crimson-maroon, and breeding males develop a curved upper jaw. This homecoming links coastal waters with quiet stream nurseries.

AUTUMN SPAWNING

Across BC, Coho generally spawn from October to January. Timing varies by watershed.

SHADED STREAM NURSERIES

Young Coho rear for one or two years in forest pools, side channels and quiet beaver ponds.

CONNECTED WATERS

Clean, cool streams and winter flood refuges support survival. Urban road runoff adds risk.

FIELD NOTES

RECOGNIZE IT

Pale lower gums, small dark spots mostly on the upper tail lobe, and a stout tail base help identify Coho.

WINTER REFUGE

Young Coho shelter in side channels, wetlands and beaver ponds when winter floods make the main stream turbulent.

OCEAN TO FOREST

Spawning adults carry marine nutrients back into streamside food webs, linking ocean and forest ecosystems.

Sources: DFO Pacific Region | COSEWIC | BC Conservation Data Centre | Nickelson et al. | Tian et al.

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