

THERE ARE TWO SEASONS, WARM AND DRY

Warm Season: January to June

Dry Season: July to December

BEST TIME TO VISIT

June to November (for diving and water based activities)

GALAPAGOS

NATURE CALENDAR

JANUARY	Marine iguanas and green sea turtles arriving to lay eggs their while land birds begin to nest.	JULY	Best month for the Blue Footed Boobies and their kin on Espanola. Everybody is up and about looking cute and dopey! Cormorants on Fernandina. Lava lizards begin mating rituals. Off the coast on Isabela, whales and dolphins are often spotted.
FEBRUARY	Nesting season for flamingos and Marine Iguanas on Santa Cruz. Doves can be seen courting.	AUGUST	Galapagos hawks begin courting; Nazca Boobies and swallow-tailed gulls are nesting.
MARCH	Marine iguanas nest on Fernandina and North Seymour. Arrival of the waved Albatross to Espanola towards the ends of the month.	SEPTEMBER	Galapagos sea lions at their most active, with males barking and fighting over females.
APRIL	Green Sea Turtles and iguana eggs start hatching on Isabela Imposing exhibit of Waved Albatross, Frigate birds on Espanola.	OCTOBER	Galapagos fur seals, lava herons, blue footed boobies can be seen rearing their chicks on Espanola and Isabela.
MAY	Blue Footed Boobies begin their courtship in North Seymour Waved Albatross begin laying their eggs on Espanola. Green sea turtles can be observed hatching at Garden Bay, Punta Cormorant and Puerto Egas.	NOVEMBER	Brown noddies start breeding and storm petrel can be seen nesting on Genovesa.
JUNE	Blue Footed Boobies' courtship rituals on North Seymour. Albatross begin laying their eggs on Espanola. Green sea turtles emerge from their eggs at Gardner Bay, Punta Cormorant and Puerto Egas.	DECEMBER	Green sea turtles are mating, albatross chicks start to fledge.

JANUARY

- BEGINNING OF THE RAINY SEASON.
- LAND BIRDS START NESTING, GENERALLY AFTER THE FIRST RAIN.
- ON HOOD ISLAND ADULT MARINE IGUANAS BECOME BRIGHTLY COLORED (GREEN, RED + BLACK).
- THE GREEN SEA TURTLES ARRIVE TO BEACHES FOR EGG LAYING PERIOD.
- LAND IGUANAS BEGIN REPRODUCTIVE CYCLES ON ISABELA ISLAND.
- BOTH, WATER AND AIR TEMPERATURES RISE AND STAY WARM UNTIL JUNE.
- IDEAL TIME FOR SNORKELING.

FEBRUARY

- ON FLOREANA ISLAND FLAMINGOS START NESTING.
- BAHAMA PINTAIL DUCKS (BLACK-TAILED PINTAIL) START THEIR BREEDING SEASON.
- NAZCA (MASKED) BOOBIES ON HOOD ARE AT THE END OF THEIR NESTING SEASON.
- MARINE IGUANAS NEST ON SANTA CRUZ ISLAND.
- THE HIGHEST WATER TEMPERATURE REACHES 25C (77F). THIS TEMPERATURE REMAINS CONSTANT UNTIL APRIL.
- VERY FEW PENGUINS ARE SIGHTED AT BARTOLOME ISLAND (MOST HAVE FOLLOWED THE COOL WATERS BACK TO THE WEST).
- NESTING SEASON OF THE GALAPAGOS DOVE REACHES ITS PEAK.

MARCH

- THE RAINY SEASON REACHES THE HIGHEST PRECIPITATION (THIS DOES NOT MEAN IT RAINS EVERYDAY).
- SPORADIC TROPICAL RAINS, INTENSE SUN TEMPERATURE CAN REACH UP TO 30C (86F). HUMIDITY IS HIGH.
- MARINE IGUANAS NEST ON FERNANDINA.
- MARCH 21ST, THE BEGINNING OF THE SUMMER EQUINOX SIGNALS THE ARRIVAL OF THE WAVED ALBATROSS TO ESPAÑOLA.
- EVEN THE WESTERN ISLANDS HAVE WARM WATERS WHERE SNORKELING IS EXCELLENT. PUNTA VICENTE ROCA ISABELA CAN BE AN AMAZING SITE.
- PENGUINS STILL ACTIVE IN THE WATER, NEXT TO TROPICAL FISH! (HOW BIZARRE!).
- SOME SHORES, SPECIALLY THOSE FACING THE NORTH SIDE, CAN BIG SURF.
- SNORKELERS CAN SPEND LONG PERIODS OF TIME IN THE WATER.



APRIL

- MASSIVE ARRIVAL OF WAVED ALBATROSSES TO ESPAÑOLA. AMAZING COURTSHIP STARTS.
- END OF HATCHING SEASON OF THE GIANT TORTOISES.
- EGGS OF GREEN SEA TURTLES BEGIN TO HATCH.
- EGGS OF LAND IGUANAS HATCH ON ISABELA.
- THE RAINS HAVE ENDED, THE ISLANDS ARE GREEN.
- GOOD VISIBILITY IN THE WATER FOR SNORKELERS.
- PERHAPS, TOGETHER WITH MAY, THE BEST MONTHS IN GALAPAGOS

MAY

- NORTH SEYMOUR'S BLUE-FOOTED BOOBIES BEGIN THEIR COURTSHIP
- SEA TURTLES ARE STILL HATCHING ON GARDNER BAY, PUNTA CORMORANT, AND PUERTO EGAS.
- MOST OF MARINE IGUANAS' EGGS HATCH FROM NESTS ON SANTA CRUZ
- PALO SANTO TREES BEGIN TO SHED THEIR FOLIAGE
- WAVED ALBATROSS ON ESPAÑOLA START LAYING THEIR EGGS
- BAN-RUMPED STORM PETRELS BEGIN THEIR FIRST NESTING PERIOD.

JUNE

- BEGINNING OF THE NESTING SEASON OF GIANT TORTOISES.
- GIANT TORTOISES ON SANTA CRUZ ISLAND MIGRATE FROM THE HIGHLANDS TO THE LOWLANDS IN SEARCH OF SUITABLE NESTING PLACES.
- SOUTH EAST TRADE WINDS RETURN. CURRENTS BECOME A BIT STRONGER. SEAS PICK UP IN SURGE AND WAVE ACTION.
- MANY RED POUCHED BY MALE FRIGATEBIRDS ON NORTH SEYMOUR.
- SOUTHERN MIGRANTS HAVE STARTED THEIR JOURNEY TOWARDS THE NORTH. GALAPAGOS IS A REST STOP FOR SUCH BIRDS.
SOME SPECIES OF CETACEANS ALSO FOLLOW THIS PATTERN OF MIGRATION.
- SOME GROUPS OF HUMPBCK WHALES THAT MIGRATE UP TO EQUATORIAL LATITUDES ALONG THE COAST OF ECUADOR, CAN REACH THE GALAPAGOS TOO.



JULY

- SEA BIRD COMMUNITIES ARE VERY ACTIVE (BREEDING), ESPECIALLY THE BLUE FOOTED BOOBIES ON ESPAÑOLA. FLIGHTLESS CORMORANTS PERFORM BEAUTIFUL COURTSHIP RITUALS AND NESTING ACTIVITIES ON FERNANDINA BEGIN.
- IF YOU WALK ALONG THE SHORES OF PUERTO EGAS SANTIAGO ISLAND YOU COULD FIND AMERICAN OYSTER-CATCHERS NESTING.
- LAVA LIZARDS START MATING RITUALS UNTIL NOVEMBER.
- CETACEANS (WHALES; DOLPHINS) ARE LIKELY TO BE SEEN, ESPECIALLY OFF THE WESTERN COAST OF ISABELA.
- GREAT MONTH TO SEE THE FOUR STAGES OF NESTING OF BLUE FOOTED BOOBIES: EGGS, CHICKS, JUVENILES AND SUBADULTS.
- WATER TEMPERATURE IS 21C (68F).

AUGUST

- GALAPAGOS HAWKS COURT ON ESPAÑOLA AND SANTIAGO ISLANDS.
- NAZCA (MASKED) BOOBIES AND SWALLOW-TAILED GULLS NEST ON GENOVESA ISLAND.
- THE TEMPERATURE OF THE OCEAN DROPS TO 18C (64F).
- MIGRANT SHORE BIRDS START TO ARRIVE, AND STAY ON THE ISLANDS UNTIL MARCH.
- GIANT TORTOISES RETURN TO THE HIGHLANDS OF SANTA CRUZ ISLAND.
- OCEANS ARE QUITE CHOPPY, CURRENTS ARE AT THE STRONGEST LEVELS, SURGE CAN BE EXPECTED ALONG THE SHORES THAT FACE WEST OR SOUTH.
- PUPPING SEASON (BIRTHS) OF SEA LIONS HAS STARTED. WESTERN AND CENTRAL ISLANDS ARE COMMON PLACES FOR SUCH SIGHTINGS.

SEPTEMBER

- PEAK OF THE COLD SEASON.
- THE TEMPERATURE REACHES ITS LOWEST LEVELS 19C (66F).
- GALAPAGOS PENGUINS SHOW REMARKABLE ACTIVITY ON BARTOLOME. SWIMMERS AND SNORKELERS AT BARTOLOME CAN WITH PENGUINS AS THEY ZOOM UNDERWATER.
- SEA LIONS ARE VERY ACTIVE. FEMALES HAVE REACHED ESTRUS STAGE, AND SO MALES ARE CONSTANTLY BARKING AND FIGHTING. SHORE FIGHTING IS HEAVY. WESTERN AND CENTRAL ISLANDS ARE THE MOST ACTIVE ONES IN TERMS OF SEA LIONS' ACTIVITIES.
- MOST SPECIES OF SEA BIRDS REMAIN ACTIVE AT THEIR NESTING SITES.



OCTOBER

- LAVA HERONS START NESTING UNTIL MARCH
- THE GALAPAGOS FUR SEA LIONS BEGIN THEIR MATING PERIOD
- BLUE FOOTED BOOBIES RAISE CHICKS ALL OVER ESPAÑOLA AND PUNTA VICENTE ROCA ISABELA.
- GIANT TORTOISES ARE STILL LAYING EGGS. MOST ISLANDS HAVE A MISTY START BUT AFTER FEW HOURS OF DAYLIGHT IT BURNS OFF.
- SUNRISES IN THE WEST CAN BE QUITE BEAUTIFUL. SUMMITS ARE CLEAR, BUT LOW-LYING FOG COVERS THE SHORELINE.

NOVEMBER

- PUPPING OF SEA LIONS CONTINUE.
- SEA LIONS ARE SEXUALLY ACTIVE ON THE EASTERN PART OF THE ARCHIPELAGO. BREEDING SEASON FOR THE BROWN NODDIES.
- SOME SPECIES OF JELLYFISH CAN BE SEEN AROUND THE ISLANDS.
- BAND-RUMPED STORM PETRELS BEGIN THEIR SECOND NESTING PERIOD.
- SEAS ARE CALM. SOUTH EAST TRADE WINDS HAVE DECREASED STRENGTH. WATER TEMPERATURES ARE SLOWLY RISING.
- GENERALLY GREAT WEATHER DUE TO TRANSITION BETWEEN ONE SEASON AND THE NEXT ONE.
- GOOD VISIBILITY FOR SNORKELERS. SEA LION PUPS (SPECIALLY AT CHAMPION ISLET) PLAY AQUA-AEROBICS NEXT TO SNORKELERS.
- MOST PUPS HERE ARE CURIOUS ENOUGH TO NIBBLE AT FINS OF SNORKELERS. THE AVERAGE AGE OF MOST PUPS IS 3-4 MONTHS.

DECEMBER

- HATCHING OF GIANT TORTOISE'S EGGS BEGINS AND LASTS UNTIL APRIL
- GREEN SEA TURTLES DISPLAY THEIR MATING BEHAVIOR
- THE RAINY SEASON BEGINS, ALL OF THE PLANTS OF THE DRY ZONE PRODUCE LEAVES. GALAPAGOS BECOMES GREEN
- GREAT WEATHER. MOSTLY SUNNY DAYS. HARDLY ANY WIND FROM THE SOUTH EAST. WATERS CONTINUE TO WARM UP.
- WESTERN ISLANDS REMAIN VERY DRY. WATER TEMPERATURE STILL COOL FOR LONG SNORKELING PERIODS.
- FIRST RED POUCHES OF GREAT FRIGATEBIRDS SEEN AT GENOVESA
- NORTHERN MIGRANTS HAVE STARTED THEIR JOURNEY TOWARDS THE SOUTH. GALAPAGOS IS A REST STOP FOR THESE BIRDS. SOME SPECIES OF CETACEANS ALSO FOLLOW THIS PATTERN OF MIGRATION.



GOWAY.COM PRESENTS: GALAPAGOS NATURE CALENDAR

OTHER FACTS

Climate changes in Galapagos

What makes the islands an outstanding destination?

February is the most important month during the Hot Season. In this time of the year, the islands not only adopt an emerald-green color, and turn humid and balmy warm, but many species start reproducing now. For these, this time is the only one where they have their best chance to pass their genes to a next generation. **Thus, February is a month when lots of unique and exciting things exclusively happen.** The experience is quite unique for our guests, and no one should miss seeing this amazing realm. Couple of highlights include the Marine Iguanas (especially those in Punta Espinoza, Fernandina Island and Punta Suarez, Española Island) with eye-catching colors, and nesting behaviour. But of course, the most committed effort goes to the frigate birds. Males will display their scarlet-red gular pouches as they try to attract a passing female. Such wildlife encounters will continue until the end of April, but it is during February, March and April where the most rewarding natural events and wildlife encounters will occur.

The marine environment deserves special attention, since the warm waters stationed at the Panamic Province, are ready to head down south, while bathing the Galapagos. We expect water temperatures to range between 24°C and 27°C (76°F and 80°F), and visibility to be generally good (15-18 metres; 50-60 feet). Having a marine tropical ecosystem next to penguins and sea lions (that come from much colder and temperate environments) is another enriching wildlife experience. What other tropical destination on Earth has a penguin? Of course, zoos don't count! The Galapagos Marine Reserve will delight every single explorer, particularly at the most western islands of the archipelago (Isabela & Fernandina). Snorkeling and glass-bottom boat outings are adventures you should not miss.

Looking at the calendar of events, we see Galapagos as the world of perpetual change, and these are the most relevant natural events expected to happen for the

February, March, April period:

The Warm Season is at its best days

The islands are almost fully green (vegetation) due to more humidity and occasional showers

Reproduction of land reptiles, as well as land birds

Great frigate birds have engaged in full courtship and nesting

Large flocks of blue-footed boobies feeding out in the west of Galapagos (Isabela & Fernandina Islands)

Arrival of first waved albatrosses to Española Island (end of March)

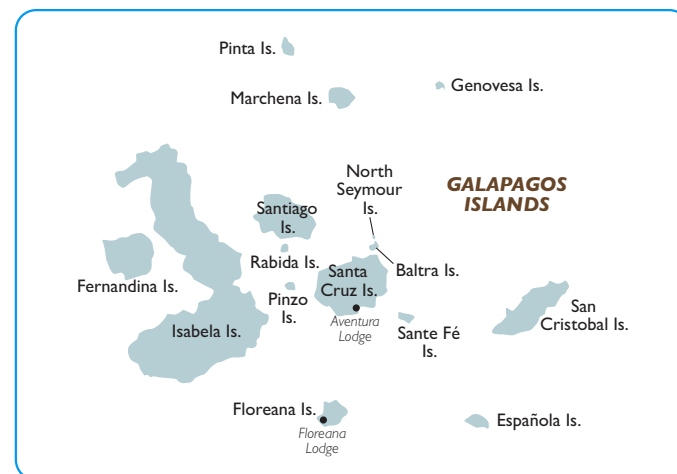
Virtual absence of south-east trade winds. This implies most waters remain calm within the islands

Sunrises and sunsets (specially out in the west) are simply spectacular

March 10th: 471st Anniversary of the discovery of Galapagos Islands by Bishop Tom's de Berlanga (1535)

Official start of transition days (end of April) between the Warm Season and the Dry Season.

Courtship of waved albatrosses and blue-footed boobies at Punta Suarez, Española Island (end of April).



Regular sightings of migratory species. Those from northern latitudes are migrating south, in response to winter months, and those first ones from southern latitudes are migrating north, in response to the arrival of the first cooler days of the austral winter.

And, of course, one of the most important reasons for coming these days: the weather! Escape the winter, the carnival, the Mardi Gras, the cold, the noise, etc, and come to enjoy the most rewarding weather of any time of the year in Galapagos: February, March and April.

Without a doubt, your decision of coming to Galapagos during these months, will be completely supported by the outstanding natural events and wildlife encounters you will experience. If you have already explored the islands during the Dry Season (July to December), may we suggest you consider returning during the months of the Warm Season? Returning to this magical paradise will be totally a new experience during the Warm Season. That is how much Galapagos changes, and our guests just love experiencing such.