



2017 Best Overall
Small Ships Category

Celebrity Xpedition®
Cruise Critic's Cruisers' Choice Awards

Celebrity's Galapagos Islands – Wildlife Calendar

January

- Land birds start nesting, generally after the first rain
- On Hood (Española) Island adult marine iguanas become brightly colored (green & red + black)
- The green sea turtles arrive to beaches in the Galapagos 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 greater 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
- Nesting season of the Galapagos dove reaches its peak

March

- 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. Penguins still active in the water, next to tropical fish! (How bizarre!)
- Marine life is very active.

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
- Good visibility in the water for snorkelers

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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 garúa season
- Giant tortoises on Santa Cruz Island migrate from the highlands to the lowlands in search of suitable nesting places
- Beginning of the nesting season of giant tortoises
- Many red pouches by males of Magnificent 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 Humpback 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), specially the Blue footed boobies on Española.
- Flightless cormorants perform beautiful courtship rituals and nesting activities on Fernandina.
- Along the shores of Puerto Egas (Santiago Island) you could find American oystercatchers nesting.
- Lava lizards initiate mating rituals until November
- Whales & dolphins are more likely to be observed, especially off the western coast of Isabela
- Great month to see the four stages of nesting in Blue footed boobies: eggs, chicks, juveniles & subadults.

August

- Galapagos hawks court on Española and Santiago
- Nazca (masked) boobies and Swallow-tailed gulls nest on Genovesa Island
- Migrant shore birds start to arrive, and stay on the islands until March
- Giant tortoises return to the highlands of Santa Cruz
- Popping season (births) of sea lions has started. Western and central islands are common places for such sightings.

September

- Galapagos Penguins show remarkable activity on Bartolome.
- Since May swimmers and snorkelers can be delighted at Bartolome with penguins active at the surface or torpedo-like while underwater.
- Sea lions are very active. Females have reached estrus stage, and so harem-gathering 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 quite active at their nesting sites.

October

- Lava herons start nesting until March
- The Galapagos Fur Seals (subspecies of 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
- Sunrises in the west can be quite beautiful after the garúa covers only certain locations of the western volcanoes.



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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
- 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 first young waved albatrosses fledge



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