

168 days. Again, Prince Rupert, which is on an island, averages 195 days but nearby Port Simpson only 169 days. An occasional year is entirely free from frost in some localities.

On the inner coast of Vancouver Island, on the islands of the Gulf of Georgia, at the mouth of the Fraser River, and in the inlets of the southern mainland, the frost-free period exhibits considerable local variation. Along the shores of the southeastern portion of Vancouver Island there are places which average 250 days continuously free from frost, while generally at moderate heights on the east face of the same slopes the length of the period falls to 175 days at an elevation of 500 feet. Such points, of course, are mostly on inner tablelands or at the low levels of valleys occupied by streams or lakes. Locally, pools of cool air may collect at these places with a possibility of the formation of frost in the early spring and late autumn.

Along the northern reaches of east Vancouver Island and among the northern islands the frost-free period varies locally from 154 to 231 days. Among the inlets of the southern mainland the continuously frost-free period varies locally from 183 to 250 days and along the lower Fraser Valley from 178 to 231 days.

The coldest month in this coastal Region is January when temperatures average 40°F. on the outer coast of Vancouver Island and 38°F. or 39°F. along the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Northward along the east coast of Vancouver Island and at the mouth of the Fraser River it is two or three degrees cooler. Near the head of the lower Fraser Valley the average temperature of this month falls to the freezing point while along the northern stretch of the coast north of Vancouver Island the mean temperature varies very much as one penetrates an inlet. It is generally about 35°F. at the mouths of the inlets and as low as 25°F. at the heads of very long inlets. The warmest month is either July or August, averaging only 58°F. on the outer coast but up to 65°F. at the head of the lower Fraser Valley. It is difficult for the temperature to rise very high along or near the coast since the sea-breeze cuts in and lifts the heated air high above the coastal valleys in the early afternoon of the summer. With distance from the coast along the lower Fraser River the energy of the sea-breeze is dissipated and, when conditions are favourable, temperatures may well exceed 90°F. On an average of about once in fifteen years a cold wave similar to those experienced on the Prairies moves into far northern British Columbia and, following the general north-south trend of the valleys in the interior, may reach the coast, bringing temperatures to zero or lower for at least a day in the southern coastal region. Along the north coast and on the Queen Charlotte Islands such an event may occur somewhat oftener, say once in ten years, although there is no regular periodicity of occurrence.

**Precipitation.**—The Pacific Coast and Coastal Valleys have a wet season which begins approximately in the last week in September and ends about the middle of March. By contrast, there is a marked dry season in June, July, and August. The winter is mild because cold waves from the polar regions almost always traverse a broad expanse of the Pacific Ocean before impinging on the coast. The summers are generally cool because the general movement of air from the west is prevented from attaining great heat during its passage eastward over the ocean.

The heaviest precipitation occurs on the outer coast of Vancouver Island, the stretch of the mainland coast northward from Vancouver Island to the Alaskan Panhandle, as well as on the western coast of the Queen Charlotte Islands. Precipitation from October to March averages 10 to 15 inches per month. Less than