

Baja California & the Sea of Cortez

Naturetrek Tour Report

21 February – 5 March 2014



Bottle-nose Dolphin



Male Northern Elephant Seal



Gray Whale Encounter



Common Dolphins

Report & images compiled by Lee Morgan



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 Mick Flude
 Lynda Flude
 Greg Smith
 Liz Hall
 Tina Nuthall
 Graham Nuthall
 Jan Showering
 John Showering

Day 1

Friday 21st February

London to San Diego

With the exception of a few, the group met at London Heathrow's Terminal 5 in the morning ready for departure. After an easy flight we landed in San Diego at a respectable 5pm and transferred to the nearby Ramada Airport hotel. Were we all spent a little time getting our bearings around the harbour and grabbed a bite to eat in Mitch's before we eventually turned in for an early night.

Day 2

Saturday 22nd February

San Diego – Board Searcher

We awoke to a bright and sunny San Diego morning. About half the group opted to have a quiet morning with a pre-breakfast wander around the harbour; enjoying the sights and sounds of people getting ready to go out fishing and watching the night herons and egrets searching the bait wells on the backs of the fishing boats. Whilst searching the trees in nearby gardens, Mike even managed to find a nice Black-throated Grey Warbler too. Many opted to join Lee for a guided tour of some of San Diego's nature reserves and birding hotspots with Chris from the local Audubon Society. At 9am we met in the hotel lobby before setting off on foot for some gentle birding around the harbour. The birdwatching started slowly but we quickly kick-started our day with some lovely views of Yellow-rumped Warblers, Least Sandpipers, Anna's Hummingbird, Black Phoebe, Bufflehead and Northern Mockingbird.

We then potted back to the hotel where we were met by a bus that took us to Silverwoods, a small nature reserve in the hills to the north of the city. We sat and enjoyed a picnic lunch around a feeding station located amidst the oak chaparral in the heart of the reserve, giving everyone time for some relaxed birding. The bird feeders were buzzing with activity and we watched as California Ground Squirrels, Spotted and California Towhee, Dark-eyed Juncos and Scrub Jays snatched food from the floor beneath the bushes while Anna's Hummingbirds and Lesser goldfinches zipped between the numerous feeders suspended around our heads. We watched for a while and added numerous other species to our growing bird list including a few local specialities such as Acorn Woodpecker, White-breasted Nuthatch and Oak Titmouse and some nice Fox Sparrows too.

After lunch we moved to a town park called Lindo Lake, usually a good spot to get a closer look at a variety of ducks and geese. We spent some time watching a large group of White Pelicans, Ruddy and Wood ducks, American Coots and Moorhens. We also had a nice introduction to the differences between Western, California and Ring-billed Gulls and spotted the first arrival of Northern Rough-winged Swallows too.

The San Diego River estuary was the next stop, a site that usually offers some outstanding bird-watching and, despite being a little quieter than usual, the mudflats were teeming with hundreds of ducks and waders as well as Royal and Caspian Terns, Great and Little Blue Herons and Snowy and Great Egrets. A little walk along the shore also revealed a few Lesser Scaup, hundreds of American Wigeon and even a single Eurasian Wigeon too (a nice surprise treat for the local birders and something nice and familiar for us).

By mid-afternoon we transferred our luggage to M/V Searcher. Most then took the chance to explore the harbour some more and to grab a bite to eat before we all boarded M/V Searcher in the late afternoon ready to set sail. After a quick welcome orientation and a chance to meet Captain Art and his crew we had lines away at about 10pm and we sailed out into the twinkling lights of San Diego Harbour. A quick detour via the bait pens at the entrance to the harbour meant we were treated to some lamp lit views (and smells) of dozens of noisy California Sea Lions, hundreds of Double-crested Cormorants and numerous herons and egrets before darkness fell completely and we left the harbour and headed southwards. It was a great start to our voyage and everyone was very excited about the wildlife watching we could expect in the days ahead of us.

Day 3

Sunday 23rd February

Ensenada – Todos Santo

Most people awoke to the sound of the slowing engines and were enjoying our morning coffee when we arrived at Ensenada as the sun slowly crept up above the horizon. After Captain Art had dealt with Mexican Customs and Immigration, we departed and slowly motored out of the harbour giving everyone a chance to enjoy some lovely views of the Surf Scoters and Black-necked (Eared), Western and Clark's Grebes that flocked around the entrance to the harbour.

We drifted slowly past Isla Todos Santos where, amidst the numerous gulls and Brown Pelicans we managed to get some lovely views of Peregrines perched high up on top of the steepest cliff on the island, while scanning the rocks closer to sea level gave us nice views of Black Oystercatcher and even a couple of Pelagic Cormorants too. The usual rocky perches had good numbers of Californian Sea Lions and the islands main beaches had a few Harbour Seals hauled out on them as well as the odd Northern Elephant Seal too, giving us all a sneak preview of the sheer scale of these enormous animals.

As we left the islands and headed out into a very gently rolling Pacific swell we took some time to watch the gulls that trailed the boat, picking out the odd juvenile Heermann's Gull that lingered with the large groups of Western Gulls. The seas were generally quiet, but it was not long before we were treated to some fantastic Common Dolphin activity with a large group of several hundred energetically playing around the boat. Birding included a lot of Northern Fulmars (both light and dark phase) feeding at surface along with frequent sightings of both Black-vented and Pink-footed Shearwaters amidst the numerous gulls. We stopped to watch several Gray Whales for a while and a group of feeding Humpbacks too. We continued to keep plenty of gulls following the boat for most of the afternoon which successfully lured numerous shearwaters, a couple of Pomarine Skuas, and even a Red-billed Tropicbird to come a bit closer.

We continued onwards into the night, winding the day down as darkness fell with the first of Robs wonderful slide shows on Pinniped biology which was received by an entire audience of wide awake passengers eager to learn more....well something like that anyway (well it had been a very long day and at least you didn't snore...).

Day 4

Monday 24th February

Isla San Benitos

It was another very early start to the day with many people emerging from their cabins as early as 4am and by 6pm everyone was enjoying a fantastic breakfast and preparing themselves for our day ashore on Isla San Benito. Calm seas and wonderfully clear blue skies make for a gentle introduction to boarding a skiff and we all enjoyed a quick skiff ride to set ashore. Keen birders in the group were treated to close views of both Black and American Oystercatcher and Caspian Tern started our morning off nicely. We set ashore on the beach in front of a tiny fishing village where the stony beach played host to a couple of tired bull Elephant Seals that casually snorted at us as we paused to photo them our way through the village to start our hike.

The fabulous weather made for a very pleasurable walk along the islands cliffs and camera motor drives were whirring as we paused by beach after beach covered with angelic looking Elephant Seal pups and the odd huge bull Elephant Seal, California Sea Lions and some lovely views of the rare Guadeloupe Fur Seals. The island had had some rain this year and was in fine flourish. Many took the time to admire the islands unique flora with fine displays of the San Benito Tarweed and the endemic Mallow too. Our stop at the old lighthouse for lunch provided everyone with a chance to admire the wonderful scenery from some of the highest points on the island; a real treat given the wonderfully clear conditions. Birding around the island was good too with numerous good views of Peregrines, Ospreys as well as Horned Lark, the endemic island race of the Savannah Sparrow, and even some migrant hummingbirds.

After such an eventful day, it was with some reluctance that we all boarded the skiffs and returned to the Searcher but the lure of cold drinks and some snacks was enough to ensure we all complied. Once aboard we all settled in as we set off south in search of more whales. We did not have to wait too long as we happened upon a large Blue Whale that surfaced close to the boat a few times before it decided to give us the slip and we moved off to look at another whale. The new whale turned out to be a Fin Whale and it wasted little time giving us the slip. However, to have seen two of the largest mammals ever to have lived in the space of just a couple of hours we were all pretty happy. We spotted numerous Cassin's Auklets as we continued to travel and we rounded the day off nicely with a nice group of Pacific White-sided Dolphins that came in close to the boat for a brief period of bow and wake riding as darkness began to fall and this lifted everybody's spirits before we were eventually called to the saloon for our evening meal.

Day 5

Tuesday 25th February

San Ignacio

We awoke bright and early again, providing everyone with some time for a leisurely breakfast and some early watching as we approached the entrance to San Ignacio Lagoon. Good numbers of Royal Terns patrolled the skies at the entrance to the lagoon but all eyes were fixed on the sea as we are joined by a small group of Common Dolphins that shepherd us towards the lagoon. The entrance to the lagoon was thick with the spouts of Gray Whales and the slightly choppy seas and cool breeze did little to deter anyone from excitedly watching from the lower decks of the boat as Art slowly weaved a course across the shallow sandbar at the entrance to the lagoon, being careful to avoid the dozens of whales that spy hopped and fluked all around us. This was another truly an astounding first introduction to this marvellous reserve.

Once safely at anchor in the lagoon we were quickly ushered into pangas for our first close up introduction to the Gray Whales and it seemed that we had barely left the sides of the Searcher before numerous adult whales had come in to take a closer look at us! For a first introduction, the whales were certainly not shy and the pace of activity was very relaxed. Some of the group had their first chance to touch a whale and when they returned to the Searcher wet from the blows of whales (and climbing the walls with excitement) the crew instantly knew that we had all had a fantastic time! After a quick lunch, we boarded the pangas once more and spent the remainder of the afternoon out with the whales providing everyone with the chance to interact with numerous adult whales and playful calves too.

The huge numbers of whales in the lagoon also provided us with the chance to watch the whales interacting with each other too and amidst thrashing flukes, splashing flippers, spy hops and breaches we spent our afternoon mesmerized by these truly amazing creatures. It certainly gave us all a lot to talk about when we returned to the boat as we compared photos and recounted our own unique encounters over a leisurely evening meal.

But our day did not finish there...after a fun interpretation of how whales may perceive sounds underwater...we all made our way out to the rear deck of the boat and, with the ships generator and lights turned off we spent a little while enjoying the peace of the lagoon, listening to the whales blowing around us and watching the bioluminescence twinkling around the boat. Unfortunately an overcast sky inhibited our ability to view the stars but it was still a wonderful evening and a great way to end the day.

Day 6

Wednesday 26th February

San Ignacio

Once again, everyone was up before dawn and after coffee, we boarded our pangas at first light for a slow morning trip around the mangroves where we were rewarded with some great views of Black and Yellow-crowned Night-herons, Tricoloured and Green Herons and even Reddish Egrets, Black Brent Geese (Brants), Willet and Marbled Godwits. A few people even managed to get views of Mangrove Warbler that stubbornly held cover before flitting rapidly across one of the small creeks. Nevertheless, it was a lovely relaxed start to the day and we all returned to the boat ready for breakfast. We whale-watched from the pangas from about 9:29am until noon where we were all provided with lots more friendly whale encounters breaching and spy hopping. Even the crew onboard Searcher had fun when a cow and calf came up to the boat to have their noses scrubbed with a deck brush! Even the presence of Bottlenose Dolphins and numerous wonderful birds did little to distract anyone from the spectacle of the Gray Whales around us.

After lunch most of the group opted to spend the afternoon out on the pangas with the Whales but some opted to take a walk on one of the lagoons wonderful beaches and spent an hour or so taking a closer look at some of the shells that get thrown up by the pacific surf and amidst the numerous robust Surf Clam shells we also found nice examples of Pacific Calico Scallop, Baja Pen, Wavy Turban, and Sand Dollars and even a few large whale bones. Unfortunately, the birdwatching was a little less lucrative...partly because a Peregrine was hunting along the beach but a small flock of Sanderling and a couple of Wandering Tattlers pecking around the mounds of rotting seaweed did provide some brief views. We returned to the Searcher late in the afternoon and immediately raised anchor and motored out into a rolling pacific swell where a nice view of the illusive 'green flash' as the sun went down and a delicious dinner rounded the day off nicely.

Day 7

Thursday 27th February

Magdalena Bay

It was another early start for many as we made our way out of the lagoon and start heading south towards Magdalena Bay. We enjoyed the sunrise over the Pacific and looked for large roquals and pelagic seabirds as we made our way south towards the tip of the Baja Peninsula.

Slightly choppy seas kicked up lots of white-capped waves which made for some tough watching conditions, but we were entertained for a while by a nice group of Long-beaked Common Dolphin that came in to bow ride as we forged our way through the waves. Plenty of Loggerhead Turtles, a Green Turtle and the occasional glimpse of a Black-vented and Pink-footed Shearwaters, small flocks Grey (Red) Phalaropes and even the odd flying fish between the troughs of the waves passed the time nicely. Sightings of distant whales provided very few worthwhile approaches but a gentle approach on a rather indifferent Humpback resulted in a 1.5 hour display of frenetic tail lunging and lobbing, a few breaches and some pec-slapping...all right next to the boat! When the whale eventually stopped its wonderful performance we headed south once more and were briefly delayed by a cow and calf Humpback that came head lunging and breaching toward the boat before veering off and disappearing into the waves. As another beautiful sunset faded and darkness fell, we enjoyed another wonderful meal and continued our journey on into the night.

Day 8

Friday 28th February

Gorda Banks – Los Frailes

Rounding the southernmost tip of the peninsula in the early hours of the morning we awoke early to find ourselves drifting off the Gorda Banks. Art was able to lower the ships hydrophone in to the water and with the engines off we were able to start the day listening to the faint songs of distant humpbacks as we enjoyed our morning coffee. However, this was cut short by Greg finding a Leach's Storm-petrel on the bow of the boat and we all hurried to have a closer look.

As we travelled along the end of the peninsula (and well within sight of Cabo) we encountered our first Humpbacks. It was a boisterous group of 8 adults and we followed them for several miles and enjoyed a wonderful display of synchronised fluking, rainbow coloured blows and some very close encounters. We spent the remainder of the morning in the company of several different groups of whales and watched behaviours that included multiple breaches, pec-slapping and tail-lobbing. It was a great morning and the weather remained kind providing us with some first-rate viewing conditions.

We anchored at Los Frailes soon after lunch and went snorkelling. Warm weather, crystal clear water and plenty of beautiful fish made for an excellent first snorkel session and, having returned to the searcher to get changed, we all spent the afternoon on shore birding around the desert scrub on the margins of the rather quirky RV park where, amongst other things, we added nice views of Costas and Xantus Hummingbird, Verdin, Grey Thrasher, Roadrunner, Green-tailed Towhee, Black-headed Grosbeak and Crested Caracara to our wonderful wildlife watching. But it was not long before we had to drag ourselves away and return to Searcher to continue our journey.

Day 9

Saturday 1st March

Punta Colorado

After a night motoring into the Sea of Cortez we awoke to the sound of the slowing engines and dropping anchor off the sandstone cliffs at Punta Colorado, off the southern end of Isla San Jose.

We watched the sunrise illuminate the beautiful sandstone cliffs and enjoyed breakfast at anchor before setting ashore for a morning walk through the hot desert arroyo. We looked at some of the wonderful desert plants and there were plenty of butterflies and reptiles to see too. We also had a good time birding the desert scrub before returning to the beach to search for fossils in the rock formations along the beach.

We returned to the Searcher to get ready for snorkelling and a change in the prevailing swell meant we had to relocate to a more sheltered reef to snorkel off. Nevertheless, the wonderful clear water, nice views of stingrays, morays, Dorado marauding the big shoals of halfbeaks, and a wide variety of colourful reef fish and sea stars made for a great snorkel session.

We headed northwards in the afternoon in search of whales. Sightings commenced with a small group of Bottlenose Dolphins that casually moved in to investigate the searcher and lingered to ride in the wake and play on the bow. But the afternoon soon became a blur of spectacular wildlife when a huge group of Long-beaked Common Dolphins appeared and travelled with us for several amazing miles....a real chance for everyone to get that one coveted dolphin shot. With such wildlife activity the time always flies but with a near constant stream of booby's and pelicans flying by too there was very little time for a break. Even as the light faded, we ended our day (as so many days often end in this part of the world) watching two amazing Blue Whales that we stayed with until light disappeared completely and we headed for anchor at Catalina.

Day 10

Sunday 2nd March

Catalina

It was another beautiful sunrise as we lay at anchor off Isla Santa Catalina. Lots of Mobula Rays feeding around the boat during breakfast got the day off to a good start, and our trip ashore in the early hours of the morning just improved on things. Andy found a wonderfully perfect small example of the endemic Baja Rattleless Rattlesnake and we marvelled at the wonderfully unique cacti and plants too. The birds included Verdin, Ladder-backed and Gila Woodpecker and some lovely White-throated Swifts to name but a few.

The group then split, some taking the opportunity for a coastal cruise, and others for snorkelling. Cruisers ended up with some lovely Bottlenose encounters and nice views of Spotted Sandpipers, and Black-necked Grebe too. More amazing snorkelling conditions with great visibility, giant lobsters and lots of colourful reef fish also meant that the snorkelling party also had a great time as well. After a quick bite of lunch at anchor we set out to search for whales once again. The light afternoon breeze was a little annoying but it kept away the invasion of tiny annoying flies that had come aboard whilst we were at anchor.

Our afternoon's search brought us up on a group of 100's of Blue-footed and Brown Booby's, and thousands of Common Dolphins that were busily smashing through dense shoals of bait that foamed at the surface. The excitement was added too when a small Humpback came lunge feeding through them all. The Humpback even lunged close across the bow too. We watched the whale for a while and its performance totally upstages all the dolphins but with a very tall blow in the distance, we slowly managed to pull ourselves away to investigate.

We soon found ourselves travelling with a Blue Whale (still in the company of our humpback, who seemed very reluctant to leave us) until the sun set over the jagged spine of the peninsula. We even spotted some distant Fin Whales too, but that would have to wait. We headed for a sheltered anchorage off Isla Monserrat and settled in for the evening where millions of surface feeding fish and squid around the boat and a beautiful starry sky entertained us until tiredness eventually took hold and we all went off to sleep.

Day 11

Monday 3rd March

Monserrat and Tembabichi

Yet another beautiful sunrise and we all spent some time watching birds from the deck of the boat as we enjoyed our morning coffee. We raised anchor and almost immediately we are watching a Humpback Whale feeding as we headed south (probably our friend from the night before). However, we had a date with some Fin Whales and we were keen to move on. As we continued south we encountered some small groups of Common Dolphins and then a spectacular group of Bottlenose Dolphins entertained us with a wonderful display of repeat breaches...one that leapt from the bow to the height of the flybridge! We continued on and found a couple of huge Fin Whales that performed nicely for us as they approached and surfaced close to the boat on several occasions.

We headed on to Tembabichi where we anchored for lunch before setting ashore to explore the marsh and mangroves and desert scrub where we saw some great new birds including Northern Harrier, Elegant Tern and both Wilsons and Semi Palmated Plovers. There were also plenty of egrets and herons and even another Roadrunner to be found before we set off once again in search of more whales. Once again we end the day in the company of another beautiful Blue Whale as the sun sets before we eventually anchor up for a barbeque out on deck, where we were joined by great shoals lots of large needlefish, squid and leaping mobulas around the boat.... and another wonderful starry sky too.

Day 12

Tuesday 4th March

Isla San Hose mangroves – Los Isolotes

We started the day with pre-breakfast skiff rides through the mangroves where (despite the midges) we enjoy some lovely views of Reddish Egrets, Yellow-crowned Night-heron and Mangrove Warblers. We raised anchor and headed south where Bottlenose Dolphins, and some truly wonderful Pilot Whales entertained us as we made our way slowly towards Los Islotes. A brief skiff ride around the islands provided us with some nice views of the Blue-footed and Brown Booby's nesting on the cliffs, some intimate views of the Sea Lions nursing their young and a Wandering Tattler too! But it is the snorkelling that really won everyone over, as we entered the wonderfully clear water and enjoyed a whole hour of interacting with playful Sea Lion pups!

In the afternoon we continued our journey south were, just when everyone was beginning to think that the trip was over, we encountered several Blue Whales that obliged us with some amazing repeat fluking! Days do not get better than Baja days!

Day 13

Wednesday 5th March

We watched the first glimmer of sunrise off the end of the Cape as the Searcher finally pulled into the harbour at Cabo San Lucas. We all enjoyed a leisurely continental breakfast as the boat was busily refuelled for its journey back to San Diego. We disembarked and said our final farewells to the crew. We then got taxis to the estuary in San Jose del Cabo where the prospect of a walk in the sunshine and some last minute bird watching certainly beat the prospect of sitting in an airport for hours on end. En route, a few people even managed one last glimpse of a Humpback Whale as we travelled along the coast road.

On arrival at the estuary, the keen birders in the group quickly set about spotting the orioles, woodpeckers and Cactus Wrens that noisily fluttered between the tall palms, while others watched the egrets, Blue-winged and Cinnamon Teal and Pied-billed Grebes in the estuary. Nice views of American Kestrel and Wilson's Snipe even added a few new species to our list of sightings and a particularly obliging Osprey provided some fine opportunities for the photographers in the group too.

Having had a little time to relax with some cold drinks and have a look around for some last minute souvenirs in San Jose del Cabo, we boarded our taxis once again and set off to the airport for our return flight home. All in all it was a wonderful way to spend our last morning and a very fitting end to the ultimate Baja experience!

Summary:

Kind weather all the way, great bird watching, desert butterflies and flowers, perfect snorkelling conditions and of course wonderful whales and dolphins that continued to perform for us the entire trip! I think that more than qualifies as a successful trip...and who could ask for more from this beautiful corner of the world. It was great sharing it with you all!

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Species Lists

Birds (✓ = recorded but not counted; h = heard only)

	Common name	Scientific name	February/March											
			22	23	24	25	26	27	28	1	2	3	4	5
1	Great Northern Diver	<i>Gavia immer</i>				✓	✓							
2	Red-throated loon	<i>Gavia stellata</i>		✓										
3	Pacific Diver	<i>Gavia pacifica</i>				✓	✓							
4	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Pied-billed Grebe	<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	✓											✓
6	Western Grebe	<i>Aechmophorus occidentalis</i>	✓	✓			✓							
7	Clark's Grebe	<i>Aechmophorus clarkii</i>		✓										
8	Northern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>		✓✓										
9	Pink-footed Shearwater	<i>Puffinus creatopus</i>		✓✓				✓		✓	✓			
10	Sooty Shearwater	<i>Puffinus griseus</i>		✓✓				✓						
11	Black-vented Shearwater	<i>Puffinus opisthomelas</i>		✓✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
12	Black Storm Petrel	<i>Oceanodroma melania</i>							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
13	Least Storm Petrel	<i>Oceanodroma microsoma</i>										✓	✓	
14	Magnificent Frigatebird	<i>Fregata magnificens</i>				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
15	Red-billed Tropicbird	<i>Phaethon aethereus</i>		✓				✓	✓	✓		✓		
16	American White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>	✓											
17	Brown Pelican	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
18	Brown Booby	<i>Sula leucogaster</i>		✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	
19	Blue-footed Booby	<i>Sula nebouxii</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓	
20	Double-crested Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
21	Pelagic Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax pelagicus</i>		✓										
22	Brandt's Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax penicillatus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	
23	Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>	✓				✓				✓		✓	✓
24	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	✓			✓							✓	✓
25	Snowy Egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>	✓			✓	✓						✓	✓
26	Little Blue Heron	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	✓				✓						✓	✓
27	Tricolored Heron	<i>Egretta tricolor</i>					✓						✓	✓
28	Reddish Egret	<i>Egretta rufescens</i>					✓						✓	✓
29	Black-crowned Night-heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	✓				✓							✓

	Common name	Scientific name	February/March											
			22	23	24	25	26	27	28	1	2	3	4	5
30	Yellow-crowned Night-heron	<i>Nycticorax violacea</i>					✓						✓	
31	Green Heron	<i>Butorides virescens</i>											✓	
32	White-faced Ibis	<i>Plegadis chihi</i>											✓	
33	White Ibis	<i>Eudocimus albus</i>				✓	✓							✓
34	Greater White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons</i>	✓											
35	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	✓											
36	Black Brant	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓							
37	Wood Duck	<i>Aix sponsa</i>	✓											
38	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	✓											✓
39	Cinnamon Teal	<i>Anas cyanoptera</i>												✓
40	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	✓											✓
41	Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	✓											
42	Blue-winged Teal	<i>Anas discors</i>												✓
43	Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>	✓											
44	Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>	✓										✓	
45	Bufflehead	<i>Bucephala albeola</i>	✓											
46	Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	✓											
47	American Wigeon	<i>Anas americana</i>	✓				✓							
48	Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>												
49	Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
50	Coopers Hawk	<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>	✓										✓	
51	Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>			✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	
52	American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>												✓
53	Sharp-shinned Hawk	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>												
54	Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	✓											✓
55	American Coot	<i>Fulica americana</i>	✓											✓
56	American Black Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus bachmani</i>		✓	✓									
57	American Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus palliatus</i>			✓						✓			
58	American Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra americana</i>	✓											
59	Black-necked Stilt	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>	✓											
60	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	✓			✓	✓							
61	Semipalmated Plover	<i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>										✓	✓	
62	Wilson's Plover	<i>Charadrius wilsonia</i>										✓	✓	

	Common name	Scientific name	February/March											
			22	23	24	25	26	27	28	1	2	3	4	5
63	Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>										✓		
64	Greater Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>	✓									✓	✓	
65	Willet	<i>Catoptrophorus semipalmatus</i>				✓							✓	
66	Wandering Tattler	<i>Heteroscelus incanus</i>					✓				✓		✓	
67	Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularia</i>	✓								✓	✓	✓	✓
68	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus hudsonicus</i>	✓	✓									✓	
69	Long-billed Curlew	<i>Numenius americanus</i>	✓			✓	✓							
70	Marbled Godwit	<i>Limosa fedoa</i>	✓			✓	✓							
71	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>				✓	✓							
72	Western Sandpiper	<i>Calidris mauri</i>					✓							
73	Least Sandpiper	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>	✓				✓	✓				✓	✓	
74	Long-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>				✓	✓							✓
75	Wilson's snipe	<i>Gallinago delicata</i>												✓
76	Grey Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>		✓										
77	South Polar Skua	<i>Stercorarius maccormicki</i>				✓								
78	Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>		✓		✓	✓							
79	American Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>				✓								
80	Royal Tern	<i>Sterna maxima</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
81	Caspian Tern	<i>Sterna caspia</i>	✓		✓		✓							
82	Black Skimmer	<i>Rynchops niger</i>	✓											
83	Craveri's Murrelet	<i>Synthliboramphus craveri</i>										✓	✓	
84	Cassins' Auklet	<i>Ptychoramphus aleuticus</i>		✓	✓									
85	Rhinoceros Auklet	<i>Cyclorhynchus psittacula</i>		✓										
86	White-winged Dove	<i>Zenaida asiatica</i>							✓		✓		✓	✓
87	Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	✓											✓
88	Common Ground Dove	<i>Columbina passerina</i>							✓					✓
89	Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓										✓
90	Anna's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte anna</i>	✓		✓									
91	Costa's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte costae</i>							✓	✓				
92	Xantus' Hummingbird	<i>Hylocharis xantusii</i>			✓				✓					✓
93	Belted Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle alcyon</i>	✓				✓						✓	✓
94	Gilded Flicker	<i>Colaptes chrysoides</i>	✓											
95	Gila Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes uropygialis</i>							✓		✓			✓

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96	Black Phoebe	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>	✓											
97	Shore Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>			✓									
98	Loggerhead shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>								✓		✓		
99	Oak Titmouse	<i>Baeolophus inornatus</i>	✓											
100	Western Scrub Jay	<i>Aphelocoma californica</i>	✓										✓	
101	Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	✓		✓						✓	✓		✓
102	American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	✓	✓										✓
103	Verdin	<i>Auriparus flaviceps</i>								✓		✓		
104	Cactus Wren	<i>Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus</i>								✓				✓
105	Bewick's Wren	<i>Thryomanes bewickii</i>	h											
106	Blue-grey Gnatcatcher	<i>Poliophtila caerulea</i>								✓	✓			
107	Northern Mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	✓							✓	✓		✓	✓
108	Grey Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma cinereum</i>								✓				
109	European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>												✓
110	Black-headed Grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus melanocephalus</i>								✓				
111	Northern Cardinal	<i>Cardinalis cardinalis</i>								✓		✓		✓
112	Pyrrhuloxia	<i>Cardinalis sinuatis</i>								✓				
113	Green-tailed Towhee	<i>Pipilo chlorurus</i>								✓				
114	California Towhee	<i>Pipilo crissalis</i>	✓											
115	Spotted Towhee	<i>Pipilo maculatus</i>	✓											
116	Black-throated Sparrow	<i>Amphispiza bilineata</i>									✓	✓		
117	Savannah Sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>						✓						
118	Song Sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	✓											
119	Lark Sparrow	<i>Chondestes grammacus</i>								✓				
120	Fox Sparrow	<i>Passerella iliaca</i>	✓											
121	White-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>	✓							✓				
122	Hooded Oriole	<i>Icterus cucullatus</i>								✓	✓		✓	✓
123	House Finch	<i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>	✓							✓	✓			✓
124	Lesser Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis psaltria</i>	✓											
125	Purple Finch	<i>Carpodacus purpureus</i>								✓				

Mammals

1	Gray Whale	<i>Eschrichtius robustus</i>		✓		✓								
2	Blue Whale	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>			✓					✓	✓	✓		

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3	Fin Whale	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>			✓						✓			
4	Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>		✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
5	Bottlenose Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>				✓					✓	✓	✓	
6	Long-beaked Common Dolphin	<i>Delphinus capensis</i>		✓		✓			1000+	✓	✓	✓	✓	
7	Pacific White-sided Dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus obliquidens</i>			✓									
8	Short-beaked Common Dolphin	<i>Delphinus delphis</i>		✓										
9	Harbour Seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>		✓										
10	California Sea Lion	<i>Zalophus californianus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	
11	Guadalupe Fur Seal	<i>Arctocephalus townsendi</i>			✓									
12	Northern Elephant Seal	<i>Mirounga angustirostris</i>		✓	✓									
13	California Ground Squirrel	<i>Spermophilus beecheyi</i>	✓											

Butterflies

Soldier , *Danaus eresinus*

Cabbage White , *Pieris rapae*

West Coast Lady , *Vanessa annabella*

Monarch , *Danaus plexippus*

Fish

Balloonfish, *Diodon holocanthus*

Beaubrummel, *Eupomacentrus flavilatus*

California Flying Fish, *Cypselurus californicus*

California Needlefish, *Strongylura exilis*

Cortez Damsel, *Eupomacentrus rectifraenum*

Cortez Rainbow Wrasse, *Thalassoma lucasanum*

Giant Damsel, *Microspathodon dorsalis*

Giant Hawkfish, *Cirrhitidae cirrhitus*

Golden Grouper , *Ephinephelus alexandrinus*

Hogfish, *Bodianus diplotaenia*

King Angelfish, *Holocanthus passer*

Manta Ray, *Manta birostris*

Ocean Sunfish, *Mola mola*

Panamic Green Moray, *Gymnothorax castaneus*

Reef Cornetfish, *Fistularia commersonii*

Remora, *Remora remora*

Scalloped Hammerhead Shark, *Sphyrna lewini*

Striped Marlin , *Tetrapturus audax*

Yellowtail Surgeonfish , *Prionurus punctatus*

Zebra Moray, *Gymnomuraena zebra*

Grey Smelt, *Thaleichthys pacificus*

Mullet , *Muli sp.*