

Baja California & Sea of Cortez

Naturetrek Tour Report

6 - 19 February 2017

Report and images by Lee Morgan



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Tour participants: Lee Morgan (leader) and Rob (local naturalist) with 21 Naturetrek clients
M/V Searcher: Captains Art, Kenny, David, Ryan, R2, Charlie and Dan

Day 1

Monday 6th February

London (Heathrow) - San Diego

After a long (and slightly delayed flight), the group eventually landed in a disappointingly wet San Diego at about 5.30pm and transferred to the nearby Ramada Airport hotel. While some opted for an early night, others managed to stay awake and spent a few hours exploring the harbour. Many took some time to get to know their fellow group members and enjoy some food, a glass of wine or a local craft beer at Mitch's seafood restaurant nearby. It was a fun first evening but, after a long day of travel, the party finished early and many retired to their rooms for an early night.

Day 2

Tuesday 7th February

San Diego – Board M/V Searcher

After three days of much-needed heavy rain, we were fortunate to wake to a very beautiful, sunny morning in San Diego's Point Loma harbour. Some were up early and ventured out for a pre-breakfast look around the harbour, while others took time for a leisurely breakfast and prepared for the day of birding ahead. Those who were up and out exploring before breakfast watched the raucous Lilac-crowned Amazons (Parrots) visiting the trees in the nearby car parks and the sunrise over the harbour.

Most of the group joined our guided tour of some of San Diego's nature reserves and birding hotspots with the local Audubon Society. At 9am we met in the hotel lobby, ready to set off on foot for a look around the picturesque harbour. We quickly kick-started our day with views of lots of Western and Eared (Black-necked) Grebes, a Say's Phoebe, Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) and Orange-crowned Warblers and a surprising view of a very obliging Rock Wren too.

A short bus journey took us across the city to Lindo Lake where we watched Brown-headed Cowbirds, Tricolored, Red-winged and Brewer's Blackbirds, American White Pelican, Great Egret, Black-crowned Night Heron, had some great views of Killdeer, and saw lots of Black-necked Stilts. We had a nice introduction to a variety of ducks and geese, including Wood Duck, Ruddy Duck, Green-winged Teal and Ring-necked Duck, to name but a few. We also had some nice views of Cassin's Kingbird, and our first mammals of the trip: a very obliging California Ground Squirrel.

After another short bus ride, we arrived at Silverwoods Reserve, a small nature reserve set amidst the oak chaparral-covered hills to the north of the city. It was raining hard when we arrived so we settled into enjoying our lunch under the cover of one of their shelters near to the feeding stations, and waited for birds to show. There was actually very little active around the feeders, largely because of a hungry looking Cooper's Hawk that was mooching on a nearby telegraph pole. After lunch, we eventually headed off, but stopped when we spotted some Acorn Woodpeckers in tree.

We eventually got back onboard the bus and headed back across town to the San Diego River estuary, where we enjoyed some great views of Least and Western Sandpiper, Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plovers, Marbled Godwit, Long-billed curlew, Whimbrel and Willet. We also saw Little Blue Heron, Great Egret, Brown Pelican, Western Osprey, Royal Tern and numerous California Gulls, before we eventually had to drag ourselves away and head back to the hotel.

After our whirlwind introduction to the birding and wildlife around San Diego, we arrived back by mid-afternoon and immediately transferred our luggage to M/V Searcher. Most then took the chance to explore the harbour some more, have a bite to eat and generally relax on board the boat, before we all congregated ready for our safety briefing and our introductions to the boat and the crew.

It was nearly 9.30pm when we cast off and headed out into the twinkling lights of San Diego Harbour. Our usual detour via the bait pens at the entrance to the harbour provided those that were still awake with some lamp-lit views of plenty of California Sea Lions and a few Black-crowned Night Herons and Great Blue Herons and lots of Brandt's Cormorants, before we eventually headed out of the harbour on to rolling pacific swells. The swells soon subsided though, and we settled into a quiet night of travel; southwards towards Ensenada.

Day 3

Wednesday 8th February

Ensenada – Todos Santo

It was just before sunrise as we came in to dock in Ensenada Harbour, and most were just waking and enjoying their morning coffee as Mexican customs officials came aboard to issue our visas. The Harbour was quiet and our customs check was brief, and we were soon setting out once more onto diminishing swells.

It was a lovely day, and the sun was starting to get really warm as we approached Isla Todos Santos and cruised slowly by the island to search for wildlife. We were able to catch a glimpse of a few Black Oystercatchers, a Brown Booby, Peregrine Falcons and Pelagic Cormorant, amidst the Western Gulls and Brown Pelicans, and the island had its usual collection of Harbour Seals and Northern Elephant Seals hauled out on the beaches.

We continued our journey south, maintaining a constant vigil for wildlife as we travelled. There was plenty of life around, but the sea conditions made it a little difficult to work at times. Nonetheless, as we travelled we spotted several smaller groups of Long-beaked Common Dolphins, a few of which came in to ride the bow for a short while. We continued to watch as we travelled, and managed to spot a passing Humpback Whale, several large Ocean Sunfish, plenty of Cassin's Auklets, Black-vented Shearwaters and even a couple of Guadalupe Murrelets too. Later in the afternoon we encountered a mega-herd of Short-beaked Common Dolphins (maybe as many as a 1000 -1500 animals) and were treated to a fabulous display of leaping and bow-riding.

Our day ended nicely with a fly-by of a beautiful Laysan Albatross too.

The diminished seas made for a calm night of motoring south and, as darkness fell, the tiredness began to kick in....just when Rob started his presentation on Marine Mammals.

Day 4

Thursday 9th February

Islas San Benito

After a relatively gentle night's travel most were up early, ready to enjoy a good breakfast before our day ashore on Isla San Benito. The sea was relatively calm as we arrived at our anchorage off Isla San Benito but a thick sea fog had engulfed the island. A few Western Gulls lingered around the boat as we had our introduction on boarding the skiffs for the first time, and we were all safely ashore ready to start our walk by 7.30am.

We started our walk by picking our way carefully past the large male Elephant Seals that were lounging on the beach, before moving up through the village where we could take a closer look at some of the typical plants of the Island (many of which are endemic species). The recent rains meant that many of the plants were starting to bloom too (the Bush Sunflowers were particularly spectacular). We stopped to talk about the numerous seabird burrows and had a closer look at some of the artificial nestboxes before continuing our walk.

We continued around the island where we found more Northern Elephant Seals. Breeding activity was still in full swing and there were still plenty of large males around, eager to maintain their harems of females, many of which were busy with the process of nursing pups.

Some people took the opportunity to get up close and personal with some of the island's cacti, particularly the Cedros (jumping) Cholla, as we ascended the notorious 'Cholla Ravine'. Nevertheless, we all made it through alive and we started our ascent towards the summit of the island, where we encountered plenty of San Benito Sparrows, Horned Larks, and even the odd White-crowned Sparrow and Yellow-rumped Warbler. A few even managed to see both Rufous and Costa's Hummingbird too.

We stopped for lunch at the scenic outlook at the old derelict lighthouse before making the descent down from the top of the island to explore the beaches on the eastern side of the island. We enjoyed wonderful views of Osprey at the nest, we managed to spot a few California Sea Lions and got some lovely close looks at lots more Elephant Seals and a dozen or so Guadalupe Fur Seals too.

By 2.30pm we were all back aboard the boat and were soon continuing our journey south to Laguna San Ignacio. The breeze that had kept us cool during our hike on the island had raised the sea state a little, but had also lifted the fog a little, and we spotted numerous Black-vented Shearwaters and Cassin's Auklets as we travelled southwards into the night.

Day 5

Friday 10th February

San Ignacio

After a very peaceful night of travel through a very sizable fog bank, we approached the entrance to San Ignacio Lagoon. A flurry of birds indicated the presence of some Common Dolphins feeding nearby, but with the lure of the lagoons ahead we did not linger. We waited for a small fog patch to clear before commencing with the difficult entry into the lagoon. We were able to enjoy watching numerous Gray Whales surfacing and fluking as our Captain and crew carefully manoeuvred us slowly over the shallow sandbar into lagoon. Once across the sandbar, Bottlenose Dolphins rode the bow briefly, and Gray Whales spy-hopped, breached, surfaced and fluked

close to the boat as we motored slowly to our anchorage. By 8am we were anchored in the heart of the observation zone and were able to watch Gray Whales surfacing all around us.

After a quick briefing on the lagoon, we were quickly ushered to the pangas for our first close-up introduction. The local panga drivers skilfully manoeuvred into position so we could get the best look at some of the whales, allowing for some sensational observation and one or two closer interactions. During the course of our day we enjoyed four very similar 90-minute panga trips, two before lunch and two after, and by the end of the day everyone had had the opportunity to observe whales fluking, breaching and spyhopping. Our time on the water also provided us with some nice views of Bottlenose Dolphin, a few Elegant and Royal Terns, Pomarine Skua, Common (Great Northern) Loons, and Surf Scoter. When even had great views of Reddish Egret, White Ibis and Marbled Godwit, and Long-billed Curlew flying over too.

After dinner, we had a “brief” but very informative lecture from Rob before we all made our way out to the rear deck of the boat where, under a short period of cloudless sky, we spent half an hour or so enjoying the planets and stars and soaking up the quiet of the lagoon; all quiet except for the sounds of whales exhaling around us.

Day 6

Saturday 11th February

San Ignacio and heading south

We started our day with a good breakfast and a morning trip into the mangroves on the edge of the lagoon. Once in the sheltered channels of the mangroves, we had a great time spotting birds such as Great and Little Blue Herons, Reddish Egret, Yellow-crowned and Black-crowned Night Heron and both Great and Snowy Egrets. In addition, we enjoyed some lovely views of Marbled Godwit, Willet and Long-billed Curlew, and more White Ibis. The clear, shallow waters meant we also got nice views of Bullseye Pufferfish too.

As we prepared for our next whale-watching sessions of the day, a curious whale approached the side of the Searcher and allowed Lee to scrub its long rostrum with a deck brush, much to the delight of both the whale and everyone watching. Once out on the pangas again, we were provided with more incredible whale encounters. One very ‘friendly’ whale spent some time with one of the boats, allowing everyone to interact with the whale, and we all enjoyed great views of lots of breaching, spy-hopping and tail splashing.

Our last session of the day provided people with the opportunity to visit one of the lagoons beautiful, pristine beaches where some of the group spent time with Rob finding out about the wonderful array of turtle and whale bones, seashells and other fascinating strandline artefacts. Some enjoyed some nice views of Snowy Plovers too. Others, however, took the opportunity for one final whale watch where they spent their time in the company of two, very playful, cow-calf pairs that frolicked with each other immediately alongside the boat for the entire session: a truly wonderful encounter.

As always, it was with great reluctance that we eventually said farewell to our panga drivers, and by 5pm we were underway and heading out of the lagoon. A bow-riding Bottlenose Dolphin and fluking Gray Whales guided us out towards the breakers and out to the open ocean once again.

Quiet seas awaited and we enjoyed dinner underway as we once again motored south through the night.

Day 7

Sunday 12th February

Magdalena Bay

It was another early start for many as we made our way south along the peninsula, and a full day of travel ahead of us. For most of the day we were crossing the front of Magdalena Bay, and a constant vigil for wildlife was maintained as we travelled. The light breeze and following swell made for reasonably comfortable conditions too.

The morning's viewing was dominated by new sightings of Magnificent Frigatebird, Craveri's Murrelets and Brown Booby, as well as several brief views of Humpbacks and a passing *Mola mola* (Ocean Sunfish). The swells made it a little difficult to keep track of the whales' erratic activity but, whilst waiting for a Humpback to surface, we were treated to a surprise glimpse of a Bryde's Whale that popped up alongside the boat.

After lunch, we enjoyed some spectacular views of huge Blue Whale that surfaced in front of the boat several times in crystal clear blue water. The birdlife was good and we had enjoyed nice views of a few scattered Red (Grey) Phalaropes, Laysan Albatross and the odd Pink-footed and Black-vented Shearwater, as we motored into the night.

Day 8

Monday 13th February

Gorda Banks

Rounding the southernmost tip of the peninsula in the early hours of the morning, we spent the whole morning whale watching in the area of the Gorda Banks and enjoyed sightings of numerous Humpbacks...many at a distance...but some relaxed Humpback Whales in clear water, fluking close to the bow. There were very few birds on the ocean, save the odd group of Black-vented and Pink-footed Shearwaters and a few Frigatebirds, but we did get a nice view of a Red-billed Tropicbird and occasionally a large Mobula Ray hurled itself out of the water, keeping us all entertained. We drifted for a while to listen for whales on the hydrophone, but without success. By mid-morning we spotted breaching whales on the horizon and ventured closer to take a look, and were treated to some spectacular repeat breaches from two whales that passed close to the boat.

We eventually broke free from the whale watching and headed towards Los Frailes and the Cabo Pulmo National Park. We enjoyed lunch en route and, once anchored, we put the skiffs in the water and headed ashore to explore the desert scrub for birds. We wandered around the cactus scrub for a while, spotting numerous Turkey Vultures, Lark Sparrows, Gila Woodpeckers, Loggerhead Shrike, Grey thrasher and both Hooded and Scott's Orioles and lots of Northern Mockingbirds. We also managed nice views of Cactus Wren and both Blue-grey and Californian Gnatcatcher too. Perhaps everyone's favourite birds were the Northern Cardinal and a spectacular Pyrrhuloxia.

We returned to the Searcher where, after the heat of the desert, a lot of people opted to go for a snorkel. It was the perfect first snorkel of the trip; everyone got on fine with all of their gear, the visibility was ok and the water was warmer than expected. There were certainly lots of colourful reef fish around, with hard corals and plenty of other exciting marine invertebrates too.

After a delicious dinner 'on the hoof' we enjoyed a large school of Smooth-tailed Mobula feeding round the boat as well as a visit from a passing Green Turtle and a very sweet little opalescent squid that all appeared in the lights around the boat. At 7.24pm we raised the anchor and we motored northwards onto the diminishing waves of the Sea of Cortez.

Day 9

Tuesday 14th February

La Paz Bay and Los Islotes

Favourable conditions resulted in our early morning arrival at our temporary anchorage in La Paz Bay. It was a beautiful morning, the ocean was calm, the water looked green with plankton but certainly clear enough to see the largest fish in the world, and there was considerable excitement as we got ourselves ready and waited for our local guides to arrive and take us out to see Whale Sharks.

The morning was an amazing experience for both the enthusiastic snorkelers and the observers who preferred to stay dry. We spent more than an hour in the company of numerous large Whale sharks, with individuals up to nine metres in length, and the local panga drivers carefully positioned the boats so that the snorkelers and observers both got excellent opportunities to see these incredible animals. For the people in the water, it wasn't easy and for some, it wasn't until they had had several attempts that they finally got the opportunity to swim alongside the huge fish. For the observers on the pangas, it was a great chance to see and photograph the huge fins of these enormous fish cruising past the boat.

Once back onboard the Searcher, we raised anchor and headed out towards Los Islotes. En route, we spotted a Humpback that we watched for a while. It performed a wonderful breach right in front of the boat before disappearing, so we took our leave and continued on to Los Islotes.

Shortly after lunch we set anchor at Los Islotes and went on a skiff ride around the island. This provided us with some close views of a California Sea Lion colony, and the chance to watch Blue-footed Boobies displaying to each other high up on their rocky perches. A few of us also had some nice views of Wandering Tattler too. After our skiff ride we then had another opportunity to snorkel. The conditions were good and there was no one else around. We enjoyed nearly an hour in the water, searching the reef for lots and lots of colourful reef fishes. However, the sleepy Sea Lions seemed unwilling to leave the warmth of the rocks to join us in the water. Nonetheless, we all had a great time.

We eventually raised anchor about 6pm and headed northwards, where we enjoyed dinner at anchor in shelter of Isla San Jose, after which we had a great talk from Rob and turned the lights out to enjoy a fabulous night sky and lots of Needlefish hunting around the boat.

Day 10

Wednesday 15th February

Punta Colorado

A new day dawned and everyone was up to watch the sun creep over the eastern horizon and illuminate the beautiful sandstone cliffs adjacent to our anchorage at Punta Colorado. Some even managed a great view of a

very bright “green flash”, and both a male and a female Peregrine were seen perched high up on the cliffs awaiting the warmth of the morning sun. It was a wonderful start to our day.

After breakfast, we set ashore to explore the beach and beautiful sandstone arroyo, where we took the opportunity to have a closer look at fossils in the spectacular sandstone rock formations, and look for desert birds like Verdin and Costa’s Hummingbirds in the cactus scrub. A few managed nice encounters with some very obliging Northern Mockingbirds and we also managed to find a very large, parasitized Tarantula (undoubtedly the victim of a Tarantula Hawk Wasp attack) too.

After our walk, many of us cooled off with a snorkel along the rocky reef at the foot of the sandstone cliffs. We enjoyed some great views of lots more colourful rocky reef fishes, including a particularly nice and beautifully camouflaged Stone Scorpionfish.

A brisk and rather cold afternoon wind hampered our afternoon search for cetaceans a little but we did manage to find a few Bottlenose Dolphins that rode on the bow for a while as we headed north. However, after a lot of searching, we were soon onto a large group of diving Pelicans, Brown Boobies and flurrying Heermann’s Gulls, and we ventured closer to have a look. The sounder and sonar were both showing that the area was thick with bait fish so we lingered a little while in hopes of finding some more dolphins or a whale. We were not disappointed when a huge Blue Whale appeared lazily out of the dark-green water, and we were able to watch it for more than an hour as it surfaced and ‘nearly fluked’ several times.

We soon ran out of light, though, and we ventured on. We managed some nice looks at Black and Least Storm Petrels as we motored towards our evening destination at anchor off Isla Santa Catalina.

Day 11

Thursday 16th February

Isla Santa Catalina

It was a beautiful morning as we lay at anchor off Isla Santa Catalina and perfect for our morning hike in the arroyo on the west side of the island; a chance to marvel at the island’s unique flora, dominated by impressive Elephant Cardon and Wavy Barrel cacti. We didn’t manage to find any of the Baja ‘rattleless rattlesnakes’ but the birding was great. Most enjoyed good views of Turkey Vulture, Loggerhead Shrike, Northern Cardinals, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Verdin, and Gila and Ladder-backed Woodpeckers, while a few people also had some good views of American Kestrel too.

Around midday, some of the group enjoyed another great snorkelling session that resulted in some wonderfully close encounters with some friendly Eared (Black-necked) Grebes and a fantastic Panamic Green Moray that grinned at us from the safety of its crevice between two large rocks. Others enjoyed a lovely coastal cruise where they had particularly nice views of Osprey and Peregrine.

After lunch, we raised anchor and headed southwards in search of marine life. We eventually found a fantastic group of curious Short-finned Pilot Whales that swam under the boat to have a closer look at us. We then spotted a group of Sperm Whales over five miles away and hurried over in hopes of getting a closer look. We enjoyed several hours of watching eight or nine Sperm Whales and calves hanging at the surface between dives,

and enjoying both cows and calves fluking together. We drifted for a little while and listened to their echolocation clicks on the hydrophone.

As the light faded, we headed towards shore and anchored off Timbabichi and enjoyed a barbeque on the back deck complete with music, and helped along nicely by some very tasty Margaritas. It all made for a very fun end to the day and was a great way to celebrate Sue's birthday!

Day 12

Friday 17th February

Isla San Francisco

The Searcher raised anchor in the early hours of the morning and motored south. At 7am we dropped anchor in the idyllic, turquoise, Caldera on Isla San Francisco, where we all went ashore for a few hours to explore the island's wonderful, wind-pruned cactus gardens, its incredible geology and spectacular scenery. Some of the group opted to hike up to the highest point on the island, to take in the views and get some photographs of the beautiful bay, whilst others searched for birds along the boulder beaches where we found Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers, American Oystercatcher and some particularly good views of some very confiding Snowy Plovers.

Having returned to the boat, it was time to cool off again. We had the opportunity to snorkel the reef along the edge of the bay where, despite some unexpectedly poor visibility and slightly choppy conditions, we still managed to spot lots of new reef fishes.

We raised anchor at 10.35am and motored out in search of more wildlife. It wasn't long before we were enjoying great views of more Bottlenose Dolphins riding on the bow (always a great experience). We enjoyed lunch as we motored south before spotting a Humpback that refused to perform for us (certainly not in the way we had become accustomed to, at least) so we left it in peace and ventured on to see some Pilot Whales that Rob had spotted from the bow. It was a big group and they were travelling fast, their bowling ball-like heads exploding out of the water each time they surfaced. We left the Pilot Whales and ventured on to take a look at another Blue Whale that had been spotted from the roof, before being distracted by some breaching Humpbacks. Having watched the Humpbacks perform for a while, we eventually continued on to watch more Pilot Whales. (Yes, this really was one of those crazy days on the water where the Sea of Cortez decided to reveal all its marine mammals in one go!) We were treated to another fantastic sunset as the sun dipped behind the jagged Baja Peninsula and enjoyed our fabulous final meal together on the boat, sharing photos, recounting our stories and describing our highlights from the tour. It was a wonderfully relaxed end to our stay on the boat.

Day 13

Saturday 18th February

Searcher finally pulled into harbour at Cabo San Lucas in the early hours of the morning and we watched as the hustle and bustle of fishing boats started their day. As the crew busily set about refuelling for their long journey back to San Diego, we relaxed, readied our things, and watched the comical-looking pelicans around the docks as we waited to disembark.

We said our final farewells to the crew, and boarded our taxis that transported us to the estuary in San Jose del Cabo where, under an ominous-looking sky, we had plenty of time for some last-minute birding. Fortunately, the rain held off and we managed to stay relatively dry throughout our walk. The estuary held its usual collection of

Ruddy Ducks and American Coots, as well as Western Osprey, and Cinnamon and Blue-winged Teal, to name but a few. The reedy margins of the estuary had lots of Great Blue Herons and we also spotted Green Heron, Least Bittern, and both Great and Snowy Egrets as well as a few White-faced Ibis. Scanning the surrounding trees and fence posts, we also found American Kestrel and a stunning Vermilion Flycatcher. It was certainly preferable to sitting in an airport for hours on end!

We eventually walked up into the town where everyone took the chance to have a cool drink, something to eat and do a little last minute souvenir shopping before we headed to the airport.

By midday we boarded our taxis once again, and set off to the airport for our return flights back to San Diego and our connecting flights back to the UK.

Day 14

Sunday 19th February

Today we completed our journey back to the UK where another Naturetrek adventure came to an end.

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Species Lists

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

	Common name	Scientific name	February													
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
1	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>		✓												
2	Brant Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>				✓	✓	✓								
3	Wood Duck	<i>Aix sponsa</i>		✓												
4	American Wigeon	<i>Anas americana</i>		✓												
5	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>		✓												✓
6	Blue-winged Teal	<i>Anas discors</i>														✓
7	Cinnamon Teal	<i>Anas cyanoptera</i>														✓
8	Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>		✓												✓
9	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>		✓												
10	Green-winged Teal	<i>Anas carolinensis</i>		✓												
11	Ring-necked Duck	<i>Aythya collaris</i>		✓												✓
12	Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>		✓												
13	Surf Scoter	<i>Melanitta perspicillata</i>			✓			✓	✓							
14	Bufflehead	<i>Bucephala albeola</i>		✓	✓				✓							
15	Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>							✓							
16	Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>		✓												✓
17	Great Northern Loon (Common Loon.)	<i>Gavia immer</i>						✓	✓							
18	Laysan Albatross	<i>Phoebastria immutabilis</i>			✓					✓						
19	Pink-footed Shearwater	<i>Ardenna creatopus</i>								✓	✓					
20	Black-vented Shearwater	<i>Puffinus opisthomelas</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
21	Least Storm Petrel	<i>Oceanodroma microsoma</i>											✓			
22	Black Storm Petrel	<i>Oceanodroma melania</i>									✓	✓			✓	
23	Pied-billed Grebe	<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>		✓												✓
24	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>		✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓			✓
25	Western Grebe	<i>Aechmophorus occidentalis</i>		✓	✓											
26	Red-billed Tropicbird	<i>Phaethon aethereus</i>									✓					
27	American White Ibis	<i>Eudocimus albus</i>						✓	✓							
28	White-faced Ibis	<i>Plegadis chihi</i>														✓

	Common name	Scientific name	February													
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
29	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>		✓					✓							✓
30	Yellow-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nyctanassa violacea</i>							✓							
31	Least Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus exilis</i>														✓
32	Green Heron	<i>Butorides virescens</i>														✓
33	Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>		✓		✓			✓			✓			✓	✓
34	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>		✓				✓	✓							✓
35	Reddish Egret	<i>Egretta rufescens</i>							✓							
36	Tricolored Heron	<i>Egretta tricolor</i>							✓							
37	Little Blue Heron	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>		✓					✓							
38	Snowy Egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>		✓				✓	✓							✓
39	American White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>		✓				✓								
40	Brown Pelican	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
41	Magnificent Frigatebird	<i>Fregata magnificens</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
42	Blue-footed Booby	<i>Sula nebouxii</i>										✓				
43	Masked Booby	<i>Sula dactylatra</i>									✓					
44	Brown Booby	<i>Sula leucogaster</i>			✓					✓		✓	✓	✓		
45	Brandt's Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax penicillatus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		✓
46	Pelagic Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax pelagicus</i>			✓											
47	Double-crested Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								✓
48	Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>						✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
49	Western Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓
50	Sharp-shinned Hawk	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>		✓												
51	Cooper's Hawk	<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>		✓												
52	Red-shouldered Hawk	<i>Buteo lineatus</i>		✓												
53	Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>		✓		✓					✓	✓	✓	✓		
54	American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>														✓
55	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>			✓	✓							✓	✓		
56	Common Gallinule	<i>Gallinula galeata</i>														✓
57	American Coot	<i>Fulica americana</i>		✓	✓											✓
58	Black Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus bachmani</i>			✓											
59	American Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus palliatus</i>				✓					✓				✓	
60	Black-necked Stilt	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>		✓												✓

	Common name	Scientific name	February														
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
61	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>		✓				✓									
62	Semipalmated Plover	<i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>		✓				✓									
63	Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>		✓													
64	Snowy Plover	<i>Charadrius nivosus</i>							✓							✓	
65	Long-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>															✓
66	Marbled Godwit	<i>Limosa fedoa</i>		✓				✓	✓								
67	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>		✓													
68	Long-billed Curlew	<i>Numenius americanus</i>		✓				✓	✓								
69	Greater Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>		✓													
70	Lesser Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa flavipes</i>		✓				✓									
71	Solitary Sandpiper	<i>Tringa solitaria</i>															✓
72	Wandering Tattler	<i>Tringa incana</i>										✓					
73	Willet	<i>Tringa semipalmata</i>		✓				✓	✓								
74	Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularius</i>		✓					✓								✓
75	Black Turnstone	<i>Arenaria melanocephala</i>					✓										
76	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>							✓								
77	Western Sandpiper	<i>Calidris mauri</i>		✓				✓	✓								
78	Least Sandpiper	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>		✓													
79	Red Phalarope (Grey Phalarope)	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>									✓						
80	Bonaparte's Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus philadelphia</i>			✓												
81	Heermann's Gull	<i>Larus heermanni</i>		✓			✓	✓	✓					✓	✓		✓
82	Ring-billed Gull	<i>Larus delawarensis</i>		✓	✓	✓											
83	California Gull	<i>Larus californicus</i>		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓
84	Western Gull	<i>Larus occidentalis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓
85	Yellow-footed Gull	<i>Larus livens</i>										✓	✓	✓	✓		
86	Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>							✓								
87	Royal Tern	<i>Thalasseus maximus</i>		✓	✓			✓	✓					✓	✓		
88	Elegant Tern	<i>Thalasseus elegans</i>						✓									
89	Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>						✓	✓								
90	Parasitic Jaeger	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>						✓		✓							
91	Guadalupe Murrelet	<i>Synthliboramphus hypoleucus</i>			✓												
92	Craveri's Murrelet	<i>Synthliboramphus craveri</i>								✓					✓		

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93	Cassin's Auklet	<i>Ptychoramphus aleuticus</i>			✓	✓					✓			✓		
94	Rhinoceros Auklet	<i>Cerorhinca monocerata</i>														
95	Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>		✓												✓
96	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		✓		✓										
97	Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>		✓												
98	White-winged Dove	<i>Zenaida asiatica</i>									✓			✓		✓
99	Common Ground Dove	<i>Columbina passerina</i>														✓
100	Lilac-crowned Amazon	<i>Amazona finschi</i>		✓												
101	Anna's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte anna</i>		✓												
102	Costa's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte costae</i>				✓					✓		✓	✓		
103	Rufous Hummingbird	<i>Selasphorus rufus</i>				✓										
104	Belted Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle alcyon</i>							✓							✓
105	Gila Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes uropygialis</i>									✓			✓		✓
106	Ladder-backed Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates scalaris</i>												✓		
107	Acorn Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes formicivorus</i>		✓												
108	Nuttall's Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates nuttallii</i>		✓												
109	Black Phoebe	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>		✓												
110	Say's Phoebe	<i>Sayornis saya</i>		✓		✓										
111	American Grey Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax wrightii</i>									✓					
112	Vermilion Flycatcher	<i>Pyrocephalus obscurus</i>														✓
113	Cassin's Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus vociferans</i>		✓												
114	Ash-throated Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus cinerascens</i>									✓			✓		
115	Loggerhead Shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>									✓			✓		
116	California Scrub Jay	<i>Aphelocoma californica</i>		✓												
117	American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>		✓												✓
118	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>		✓		✓					✓	✓		✓	✓	
119	Verdin	<i>Auriparus flaviceps</i>									✓			✓	✓	
120	Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>				✓										
121	Tree Swallow	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>		✓												
122	Violet-green Swallow	<i>Tachycineta thalassina</i>		✓												
123	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>														✓
124	Cactus Wren	<i>Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus</i>									✓					✓

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125	Rock Wren	<i>Salpinctes obsoletus</i>		✓												
126	Blue-grey Gnatcatcher	<i>Poliophtila caerulea</i>									✓					
127	California Gnatcatcher	<i>Poliophtila californica</i>									✓		✓			
128	Northern Mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>									✓		✓	✓		
129	Grey Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma cinereum</i>									✓					
130	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		✓												
131	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>		✓												
132	House Finch	<i>Haemorhous mexicanus</i>		✓							✓			✓		✓
133	Orange-crowned Warbler	<i>Leiothlypis celata</i>		✓												
134	Common Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>		✓												
135	Mangrove Warbler	<i>Setophaga petechia</i>							✓							
136	Audubon's Warbler	<i>Setophaga auduboni</i>		✓		✓										✓
137	Hooded Oriole	<i>Icterus cucullatus</i>									✓					
138	Scott's Oriole	<i>Icterus parisorum</i>									✓					✓
139	Red-winged Blackbird	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>		✓												
140	Tricolored Blackbird	<i>Agelaius tricolor</i>		✓												
141	Brewer's Blackbird	<i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i>		✓												✓
142	Great-tailed Grackle	<i>Quiscalus mexicanus</i>		✓												
143	Brown-headed Cowbird	<i>Molothrus ater</i>		✓												✓
144	Song Sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>		✓					✓							
145	White-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>		✓		✓										
146	Savannah Sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>							✓							
147	San Benito Sparrow	<i>Passerculus s. sanctorum</i>				✓										
148	Lark Sparrow	<i>Chondestes grammacus</i>									✓					
149	Black-throated Sparrow	<i>Amphispiza bilineata</i>														✓
150	Northern Cardinal	<i>Cardinalis cardinalis</i>									✓			✓		
151	Pyrrhuloxia	<i>Cardinalis sinuatus</i>									✓			✓		

Mammals

1	Gray Whale	<i>Eschrichtius robustus</i>						✓	✓								
2	Blue Whale	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>								✓			✓	✓	✓		
3	Bryde's Whale	<i>Balaenoptera edeni</i>								✓							

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4	Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>			✓					✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
5	Sperm Whale	<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>												✓		
6	Short-finned Pilot Whale	<i>Globicephala macrorhynchus</i>												✓	✓	
7	Bottlenose Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>					✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	
8	Long-beaked Common Dolphin	<i>Delphinus capensis</i>			✓		✓									
9	Short-beaked Common Dolphin	<i>Delphinus delphis</i>			✓						✓					
10	Risso's Dolphin	<i>Grampus griseus</i>														
11	Harbour Seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>			✓											
12	California Sea Lion	<i>Zalophus californianus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓			✓
13	Northern Elephant Seal	<i>Mirounga angustirostris</i>			✓	✓										
14	Guadalupe Fur Seal	<i>Arctocephalus townsendi</i>				✓										
15	California Ground Squirrel	<i>Spermophilus beecheyi</i>		✓												

Reptiles

1	Green Seaturtle	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>								✓	✓	✓				
2	Loggerhead Turtle	<i>Caretta caretta</i>								✓						
3	Side-blotched Lizard	<i>Uta squamata</i>				✓						✓		✓		
4	Hunsaker's Spiny Lizard	<i>Sceloporus hunsakeri</i>											✓			

Fish

1	Ballonfish	<i>Diodon holocanthus</i>									✓		✓	✓	✓	
2	Barber Fish	<i>Johnrandallia nigriristris</i>									✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3	Beaubrummel	<i>Eupomacentrus flavilatus</i>										✓	✓	✓	✓	
4	Bicolor Parrotfish	<i>Cetoscarus bicolor</i>									✓	✓		✓		
5	Blue and Gold Snapper	<i>Lutjanus viridus</i>										✓	✓	✓		
6	Blue Parrotfish	<i>Scarus coeruleus</i>									✓					
7	Bluechin Parrotfish	<i>Scarus ghobban</i>									✓		✓			
8	Bullseye Puffer	<i>Sphoeroides annulatus</i>							✓							
9	Coral Hawkfish	<i>Cirrhichthys oxycephalus</i>									✓	✓	✓	✓		
10	Cortez Angelfish	<i>Pomocanthus zonipectus</i>										✓				
11	Cortez Chub	<i>Kyphosuselegans</i>										✓	✓	✓	✓	
12	Cortez Damsel fish	<i>Eupomacentrus rectifraenum</i>									✓			✓	✓	

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13	Cortez Rainbow Wrasse	<i>Thalassoma lucasanum</i>										✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
14	Creole Fish	<i>Paranthias furcifer</i>											✓				
15	Finescaled Triggerfish	<i>Balistes polylepis</i>											✓				
16	Giant Damselfish	<i>Microspathadon dorsalis</i>										✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
17	Giant Hawkfish	<i>Cirrhitidae cirrhitus</i>										✓	✓	✓	✓		
18	Grey-barred Grunt	<i>Conodon nobilis</i>												✓	✓	✓	
19	Hogfish	<i>Bodianus diplotaenia</i>										✓	✓				
20	King Angelfish	<i>Holocanthus passer</i>										✓	✓	✓		✓	
21	Leopard Grouper	<i>Mycteroperca rosacea</i>										✓	✓	✓			
22	Mexican Goatfish	<i>Mulloidichthys dentatus</i>										✓	✓	✓	✓		
23	Moorish Idol	<i>Zanclus canescens</i>										✓	✓	✓	✓		
24	Needlefish	<i>Strongylura exilis</i>										✓	✓		✓		
25	Guineafowl Puffer	<i>Arothron meleagris</i>										✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
26	Ocean Sunfish	<i>Mola mola</i>			✓												
27	Orange-sided Triggerfish	<i>Sufflamen verres</i>											✓	✓	✓		
28	Panama Graysby	<i>Cephalopholis panamensis</i>													✓		
29	Panamic Fanged Blenny	<i>Ophioblennius steindachneri</i>										✓	✓		✓		
30	Panamic Green Moray	<i>Gymnothorax castaneus</i>												✓	✓		
31	Panamic Sergeant Major	<i>Abuldefduf troschelii</i>										✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
32	Reef Cornetfish	<i>Fistularia commersonii</i>										✓	✓	✓	✓		
33	Scissortail Damselfish	<i>Chromis atrilobata</i>										✓	✓	✓			
34	Scorpionfish	<i>Scorpaena guttata</i>												✓			
35	Smelt	<i>Osmeridae sp.</i>						✓									
36	Smooth-tailed Mobula	<i>Mobula thurstoni</i>										✓				✓	
37	Spottail Grunt	<i>Haemulon maculicauda</i>														✓	
38	Spotted Sharp-nosed Puffer	<i>Canthigaster solandri</i>											✓	✓	✓	✓	
39	Whale Shark	<i>Rhincodon typus</i>											✓				
40	Yellowtail Surgeonfish	<i>Prionurus punctatus</i>										✓	✓	✓	✓		