

Baja California & the Sea of Cortez

Naturetrek Tour Report

27 February - 11 March 2008



Blue Whale



Northern Elephant Seal



Spirit of Adventure



Gray Whale

Report and photos compiled by Tim Melling



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The Crew of the Spirit of Adventure:	Mike (Skipper), Mike (aka Cheddar) Brian, Scottie, Steve, Gary, Dean (the chef).
Participants:	Jane Starmore Helen Houston Pat Donovan Peter Gane Bruce and Greta Anscome John Colan Margaret Morlan Jay Patel Simon and Sue Scott Frank and Angela Martin Derek and Karin Churchman Tony and Sue Upton Vivienne Palmer Stewart and Jan Ellett John and Julie Tillotson Sandra White Kevin Perks

Day 1

Wednesday 27th February

Our flight from Heathrow left at 10:15 on the eight and a half hour flight to Chicago. We flew up the west coast of Scotland, and over the Outer Hebrides and St Kilda. Later we flew over Greenland and the pack ice in the Davis Strait before flying over miles of taiga forest. We had a five-hour wait in Chicago, which was covered in snow and sub-zero, but sunny. The commonest bird here was Rough-legged Buzzard, and we spotted hunting white-tailed jackrabbits on the grassy strips between the runways. There were also a few Red-tailed Hawks but very little else of note. At 17:55 we boarded the four-hour flight to San Diego just as it was going dark. We arrived in San Diego at 8pm local time, but 4am GMT! A convoy of taxis took us to the Vagabond Inn, which was just five minutes drive from the airport. Here we met up with the rest of the party who had made their own way to San Diego.

Day 2

Thursday 28th February

We persuaded the H&M staff to hold onto our bags for the day as there was not enough space in the Inn for them. They were a little daunted by 27 bags but they squeezed them into their storeroom and even behind the counter of the shop. After breakfast the party split up; some visited San Diego Zoo, some visited San Diego and the rest went bird watching.

We hired some taxis and first went to San Diego river mouth which had enormous numbers and variety of birds, particularly herons, waders and ducks but there were a few other birds of interest; Ospreys, American Kestrel, Peregrine, Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks, Belted Kingfisher, Brown Pelicans, and Shorelarks etc. Several small rock squirrels were also quite vocal and visible.

We then took our taxis to Famosa Slough (pronounced slew) which was a great little reserve full of waders and ducks plus lots of Anna's Hummingbirds, Song Sparrows, Cassin's Kingbird and a Black Phoebe. We also saw two Camberwell Beauty butterflies here (known as Mourning Cloaks in the USA).

We then returned to Point Loma where a visit to Shelter Island produced Heermann's Gulls, Surf Scoters, Black-necked Grebes, Brewer's Blackbirds and both Black and Say's Phoebe. The Pelicans here were also very photogenic.

We boarded the Spirit of Adventure at 6pm ready to set sail at 10am. We hadn't expected much to eat but there was a great spread of cold meats, salads and bread for sandwiches. First stop were the fish pens close to the harbour mouth where there were about 50 Californian Sea-lions, plus numerous Brandt's and Double-crested Cormorants, Great Blue and Night Herons, all pinching live sardines through tiny holes in the wooden lids to the pens.

Day 3

Friday 29th February

At dawn we arrived at Ensenada to clear our arrival in Mexico with the authorities. It was overcast, but there were plenty of birds to see. Pelicans, Royal and Caspian Terns plus a Peregrine were all on view. As we left the harbour we passed a flock of several hundred Surf Scoters plus a couple of Great Northern Divers. We were then treated to a full cooked breakfast, but it went cold as we all rushed on deck to be entertained by our first cetaceans, an obliging pod of nine Pacific White-sided Dolphins.

We continued on to Todos Santos Island where we saw a couple of Elephant Seals plus many Harbour Seals and many Brandt's Cormorants. We didn't stay long here, as we were lured into the open sea by the blows of Grey Whales. A little later we had a real surprise with two elusive Minke Whales surfacing briefly in front of the boat. We saw several Grey Whales as we drifted south. Birds were dominated by thousands of Cassin's Auklets with a few Rhinoceros Auklets and Craveri's Murrelets. We also saw small numbers of Sooty, Pink-footed and Black-vented Shearwaters, but the star of the show was a Black-footed Albatross, which dwarfed the nearby dark Fulmars.

Around lunchtime we were surrounded by about 400 (Short-beaked) Common Dolphins. They performed wonderfully, but were characteristically difficult to photograph. The afternoon was quite quiet, with the occasional interesting Shearwater (Sooty or Pink-footed) or Grey Phalarope. A few skeins of Brants flew north over the sea to their Arctic breeding grounds.

Late in the afternoon the Captain spotted some Dall's Porpoises, which were frustratingly elusive, but eventually revealed themselves to everyone. Scott said they had hardly ever seen this species before, and had never seen any this far south. Five different cetacean species and an Albatross, and this was still our first day at sea!

Day 4

Saturday 1st March

First bird of the morning was a Black-footed Albatross which returned to the boat three times in twenty minutes. Straight after breakfast the captain spotted some Pilot Whales. We approached slowly and the sea seemed to be boiling with them. There were also about three Fin Whales and about six White-sided Dolphins associating with them. This rather delayed our trip on the skiffs to San Benitos Island where the group split up. Scott took the energetic ones up the hill while Tim took a more leisurely bird watching walk. We saw lots of Northern Elephant Seals including several on the beach where we landed. California Sea Lions were around, along with a few Guadalupe Fur Seals. There were a few interesting birds, not least the local San Benitos race of Savannah Sparrow (lacking any yellow), plus Lincoln's, Chipping and White-crowned Sparrows. There were a few other migrants; Audubon's Warblers (aka Western Yellow-rumped Warblers), Say's Phoebe and Northern Mockingbird. Also many birds characteristic of rocky shores; Black Turnstone, Black and American Oystercatcher, Wandering Tattler, Whimbrel, American Golden and Grey Plovers.

The group that climbed the hill found several Shorelarks on the summit. Before returning to the boat we had a picnic lunch, then got back on the skiffs. We then sailed to San Benitos East where we got close to Sea-lions among the kelp in the water. We then headed south in order to catch the tidal surge to get into San Ignacio lagoon the following morning. En route we saw two more Black-footed Albatrosses, six Grey Phalaropes, dozens of Black-vented Shearwaters and a fly-by Long-billed Curlew. The only cetaceans this evening were a handful of Grey Whales. After dark a disoriented Cassin's Auklet landed on the boat, it seemed to be in good condition and flew off strongly when we launched it.

Day 5

Sunday 2nd March

Early morning saw a few Grey Whales, Long-beaked Common and Pacific White-sided Dolphins. There were also a few interesting birds, such as Pomarine Skua and flocks of Western Grebes, Pacific Divers and Surf Scoters. We arrived at San Ignacio lagoon just after breakfast and were surrounded by Grey Whales almost immediately. We anchored in sunny but breezy weather and three pangas (the Mexican name for skiffs, or small boats) arrived to take us to see the whales. The morning trips didn't get to touch whales but we all got fantastic views of spy-hopping whales. More Pacific and Great Northern Divers provided the bird interest, along with a few White Ibises flying over.

We then came back for lunch then went out on the pangas again in the afternoon. This time we all got to stroke a friendly calf that kept returning to our boats with its mother keeping a little further back. The skin of the whale was much softer than most of us expected, almost like touching a leather settee, rather than a rubber tyre. This was one of the most magical experiences of our lives. There were a few breaching whales, all very difficult to photograph. The whales also seemed to show flukes more often this afternoon.

After the panga trips we just relaxed on the boat, enjoying the numerous Gray Whales around the boat. Tim scanned the shores with his telescope and saw a variety of waders and herons. Most unusual was a Coyote foraging on the shore, which was later joined by a second individual.....not a species we expected to see on a whale trip!

We watched a beautiful sunset and even managed to photograph whales in the sunset. After dark the whales still continued to visit the boat. We could hear them blowing right next to the ship and even see the really close ones by the boats' light.

Day 6

Monday 3rd March

We arose to beautiful clear skies and whales still plentiful around the ship. We were supposed to set off early to catch the high tide in the mangroves but the whales were just too appealing. We had several whales, including mothers with calves, constantly rubbing against the boat and spy-hopping. Eventually we had breakfast then had a quick visit to the mangroves until high winds and dropping tides meant we had to retreat. We managed to see a few species in the mangroves; Reddish Egret, Night Herons, Great and Snowy Egrets. The wind had really picked up while we were sheltered in the mangroves and so we had a very wet ride back to the boat. It was too windy to take to the pangas again so we just enjoyed the whales from the boat. One particularly energetic individual repeatedly breached close to the boat. Nine breaches in succession was his record, which enabled most people to get a photograph. Also an elusive Loggerhead Turtle pleased a few lucky observers.

After a relaxing afternoon the skipper tried to take the boat out of the lagoon but the high winds, crashing waves and low tide prevented him from doing so. We reached the lagoon entrance and then turned back, with the plan of spending another day in San Ignacio Lagoon.

Day 7

Tuesday 4th March

Dawn broke to beautiful clear skies with very little wind. Tim took one group back into the Mangroves while the others opted for more whale watching. The Mangrove trip was exactly what we wanted. Within a few minutes we had excellent views of both male and female Mangrove Warblers, Reddish Egrets, Tricoloured and Little Blue Herons plus both Yellow and Black-crowned Night Herons. Other birds of interest were several Belted Kingfishers, Buffleheads, Red-breasted Mergansers and Double-crested Cormorants. The whale watching groups were also having a great time getting really close to Grey Whales. Several Turtles (Green and Loggerhead) were seen by most people, though they never remained at the surface for long.

Mid morning we all returned to the boat for drinks and cakes, then back out to more whale watching. The first Frigatebird of the trip flew over the lagoon but soon disappeared. The whale watching this time was even better with all boats managing to touch Grey Whale calves that just kept coming back for more attention. One or two even managed to fulfil their ambition of kissing a whale.

After lunch Scott led a trip to walk the beach while others opted for yet more whale watching. Scott found skeletons of Grey Whale, Bottle-nosed and Common Dolphins while others found dead Turtles and a dead Horn Shark. The birdwatching was quite good too, as we managed to add both Snowy Plover and the rare Wilson's Plover to the list. At 4pm we set off for another attempt to leave San Ignacio Lagoon and this time we were successful. A Coyote flushed a massive flock of roosting Terns, Gulls and Pelicans as we passed the mouth of the lagoon. The sun set into a cloudless sky and most people managed to see the green flash, where the orange turns momentarily green just before it disappears below the horizon.

Day 8

Wednesday 5th March

We sailed all night to reach the deep water off Magdalena Bay at dawn and already some interesting seabirds had started to appear. We saw several Magnificent Frigatebirds, two Red-billed Tropicbirds and a Blue-footed Booby before 9am, and a school of Dolphins were bow riding for ages. At about 9am we saw three large blows and tail fluking, which turned out to be some very photogenic Humpback Whales. Not long after Scott noticed an enormous blow, which turned out to be our first Blue Whale. Mike the Skipper adeptly manoeuvred the boat using his sonar, so that the Blue Whale was close to the boat each time it surfaced. We could see the blue colouration through the crystal waters making it look like the bottom of a swimming pool. This was a lifelong ambition achieved by most people on the trip, to see the largest animal that has ever lived on the planet.

As the morning wore on we had more Grey Whales, two more Humpbacks and a lot of Shearwaters. After lunch we spotted more Blue Whale blows and we found four animals, one of which we followed and photographed. This one had several Ramora fish that normally stick to sharks, but these fish eat krill, leaving the whale to feed when taken to rich feeding areas.

We continued south seeing several more Blue and Humpback Whales, but the skipper didn't want to stop unless they were doing anything "interesting" (i.e. lunge-feeding or showing flukes on diving). We came across a group of four Blue Whales, one of which did obligingly show its tail flukes on diving. A little while later we also came across a lunge feeding Blue Whale. On one occasion he spectacularly lunged at the surface, so his lower jaw protruded from the water like a giant Basking Shark.

Birds were a little thin on the ground but four Grey Phalaropes flew in and landed on the sea near the boat. As the sun went down, we were again treated to the green flash, after another completely cloudless day. Most peoples' ambition for this trip was to see a Blue Whale, but we certainly didn't expect about fifteen in one day, with one or two sightings within a few feet of the boat!

Day 9

Thursday 6th March

We sailed through the night and arrived off the Cape of Baja at dawn. There were plenty of Common and Bottle-nosed Dolphins plus small numbers of Shearwaters. Stars of the show were seven Frigatebirds that constantly hovered over the boat, occasionally all landing on the ropes. Most unexpected was a Masked Booby that circled the ship several times.

Soon after this we started seeing our first whales. There were lots of Humpbacks, but perhaps equal numbers of Grey Whales, that were apparently mating too. The water was cooler than usual this year, which resulted in Grey Whales travelling further south than usual. We saw lots of tail fluking Humpbacks, but only distant breaching. Scott lowered a hydrophone into the water and we could all hear the amazing sound of Humpbacks singing. They sounded like distant wolves, or perhaps gibbons. Much more musical than the asthmatic wheezing sound they sometimes make at the surface (which sounds more like a tardis taking off, than a whale blow). We also saw Grey Whales breaching, and it was a treat to look down on them in such clear water. Unfortunately after a calm, still morning the wind rose and the sea became incredibly rough as we sailed to Los Frailes. The heavy seas made the Dolphins and whales more active with lots of leaping clear of the water. We also saw several Mobulas (Manta Rays) and a Turtle, probably a Loggerhead.

At Los Frailes most people went snorkelling and enjoyed seeing a variety of colourful fish, although the water was a little cool. After this we went on a bird walk and saw a good variety of birds; Hooded Oriole, Lark and Chipping Sparrows, Green-tailed Towhee, Gila and Ladderback Woodpeckers, Ash-throated and Gray Flycatchers, White winged and Common Ground Doves, Blue-Gray Gnatcatchers, Lesser Goldfinches, Costa's Hummingbirds, Verdins, Mockingbirds, House Finch, Pyrrhuloxias, lots of Turkey Vultures and two Crested Caracaras. We stayed until dark then took the skiffs back to the boat.

Day 10

Friday 7th March

The weather was still windy so we waited in the shelter of Los Frailes until 4am until making the bumpy journey north through the Sea of Cortez. There was very little to see in the choppy conditions apart from a few Grey Whale blows and a few Frigatebirds. Mid morning about 500 Long-beaked Common Dolphins put on a show around the boat for about an hour.

We then continued north until we reached the island of Cerralvo. Here we were entertained by diving Pelicans and our first Yellow-footed Gulls, a near endemic to Baja. Most unexpected were two extralimital Mangrove Swallows, like Violet-Green Swallows but with complete white rumps. Other birds included Black-throated Sparrows, Costa's Hummingbirds, Gila and Ladder-backed Woodpeckers, Gray and Ash-throated Flycatchers, Grey Vireo, Verdins, Orange-crowned Warbler plus lots of Mockingbirds. Birds of prey seen were the ubiquitous Turkey Vultures, a few Red-tailed Hawks and an Osprey. Offshore we saw our first Elegant Tern.

Day 11

Saturday 8th March

We set off from Isla Cerralvo at 2am and sailed north towards San José, passing the Island of Espiritu Santu en route. At dawn a shrimp boat passed with over 100 Frigatebirds around it, plus hundreds of gulls. Other birds of interest were a few Pomarine Skuas and Blue-footed Boobies, plus lots of our first Brown Boobies.

As we approached the tiny island of San Francisco (just south of San José) we spotted a Blue Whale. It was diving deep and long, and was impossible to follow on the sonar because of the mass of krill. We watched it surface for about forty minutes then left it in peace. A few fortunate people saw four Scalloped Hammerhead Sharks surface just as the Blue Whale was surfacing but a large Mobula (Manta Ray) was more obliging.

We then landed on San Jose and toured the mangroves in the skiffs. Here we saw Yellow-crowned Night Herons, Snowy, Great White, Reddish Egrets, Little Blue and Tricoloured Herons plus a Belted Kingfisher. We also saw Whimbrels, Least and Spotted Sandpipers and an American Oystercatcher. We heard Mangrove Warblers but didn't see any. We also saw Osprey and Peregrine, as well as the ubiquitous Turkey Vultures.

After lunch most of us went snorkelling and saw a variety of reef fish, which was brilliant, although the water was a bit chilly. We then sailed north in the San José channel and saw a few birds of interest, such as Tropicbird and Grey Phalaropes. We also finally managed to see the elusive Xantus' Murrelet, distinguished from the similar Craveri's Murrelet by the white underwings. According to the books they shouldn't occur in the Sea of Cortez but Scott told us that they bred here as he had previously seen recently fledged young with adults.

As sunset approached we noticed at least six Blue Whales blowing about 2 miles ahead. There were several more even further ahead. We arrived just in time to take Blue Whales and sunset shots, all facilitated by Mike's expert manoeuvring of the boat. They were lunge feeding on krill at the surface. There was a single Fin Whale among them, distinguishable by the large dorsal fin. The backdrop to all this was a beautiful sunset with a tiny crescent moon. To celebrate this wonderful day we were served iced margaritas.

Following the evening meal we switched out all the lights and went searching for bioluminescence. This occurs when a single-celled planktonic Diatom called Noctiluca gets agitated. Mike managed to find some Common Dolphins in the dark and everyone was awestruck. It was a hundred times better than we had expected. The combination of no moon, still conditions, lots of Noctiluca and Dolphins made it a very memorable evening. As the Dolphins swam in front of the boat they glowed with the perfect ghostly Dolphin outline with a glowing wake lasting about 25 metres. The water was so clear that you could see the Dolphins up to 10m under the water too, something you cannot do during daytime. With several Dolphins crossing paths in front of the boat it looked like a firework exploding. Even those who had seen bioluminescence before admitted that this was the best display they had seen. Mike told us a story about a soldier on a boat in the Japanese seas during World War II. He was on night watch and raised the alarm because he thought there was a torpedo heading for their ship. This was a Dolphin, and the soldier suffered the nickname Fish for the rest of his military life.

Day 12

Sunday 9th March

At dawn Mike searched in vain for last night's Blue Whales, so we decided to go straight to Napolo. This is a tiny village at the mouth of a long canyon, where desert scrub meets coastal mangroves. There is no drinking water here so the villagers came to meet us to fill up their water vessels from the boat's supplies. In the area around the village we saw Spotted Sandpiper, Belted Kingfisher, Xantus' and Costa's Hummingbirds, Cardinals, Phainopeplas, Pacific Slope Flycatcher, California Quails, Ladder-backed and Gila Woodpeckers, Blue-Grey Gnatcatchers, White-winged and Common Ground Doves and Violet-Green Swallows. We also saw Queen butterflies (*Danaus gillippus*), a close relative of the Monarch, feeding on the blue flowers of Morning Glory.

We then set off south and started to encounter Long-beaked Common Dolphins in the hundreds. A short while later we encountered a Humpback and calf, then two Blue Whales, one of which showed its flukes just once. We then noticed two smaller rorqual whales, one of which Mike pursued and we managed to clinch as Bryde's Whale (pronounced Brewder's, the Norwegian way). Photographs showed the diagnostic triple ridges on the rostrum, although they were not particularly apparent in the field. The confusion species is Sei Whale but this is more northern, and has a different emergence pattern (shows the blow and fin simultaneously).

We then headed to the north end of Espiritu Santu, en route passing through a group of about 1000 Common Dolphins, plus several Mobulas. As we approached the sea lion colony at Isla Losislote both species of Booby became much more numerous. We then boarded the skiffs and took a trip around the sanctuary to see the California Sea Lions and Brown and Blue-footed Boobies before actually snorkelling with the Sea-Lions. This was an amazing experience enjoyed by all, with curious Sea-Lions approaching us and staring us straight in the eye. The really large males also approached us but showed no timidity as they knew who was boss.

Sailing south we enjoyed the sunset over Espiritu Santo and managed to add yet another species in the shape of six Black storm Petrels flying alongside the boat.

Day 13

Monday 10th March

We arrived at the port at 7am and sadly had to leave the Spirit of Adventure. We managed to see one Grey Whale in the morning, plus a few interesting species around the harbour; Green Herons, Snowy Egrets, Black-necked Grebe, Ospreys. We said farewell to Scott and the crew, and also to those who were not travelling straight back to Heathrow. The airport at Cabo San José was an hour's taxi ride away but we drove through some interesting habitat and saw several interesting birds including Caracaras, American Kestrels and Loggerhead Shrikes.

All agreed that this had been a fantastic holiday, certainly living up to its billing of hundreds of whales and thousands of dolphins.

As a post script for anyone reading this report in future years, there was some excellent bird watching close to Cabo San José airport and it is a great way to make the three hour wait go quicker. Bear right outside the airport and after a few hundred yards, try the desert scrub on the right behind the National Car Hire Depot. Here I saw Roadrunner, Crested Caracaras, Western Scrub Jays, Grey Thrashers, Scott's and Hooded Orioles, Cactus Wren, Pyrrhuloxias, Cardinal, Lark, Song and Clay-coloured Sparrows, Verdins, Gilded Flickers and Gila Woodpeckers.

Species Lists

Birds

	Common name	Scientific name	February/March											
			28	29	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Great Northern Diver	<i>Gavia immer</i>		2		6	10	10						
2	Pacific Diver	<i>Gavia pacifica</i>				10	6	5						
3	Slavonian Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	5											
4	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	20	20			2	6		2		10	30	2
5	Pied-billed Grebe	<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	10											
6	Western Grebe	<i>Aechmophorus occidentalis</i>	4			30		1						
7	Black-footed Albatross	<i>Phoebastria nigripes</i>		1	3									
8	Northern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>		30	10				2					
9	Pink-footed Shearwater	<i>Puffinus creatopus</i>		5					5	2				
10	Sooty Shearwater	<i>Puffinus griseus</i>		5						1				
11	Black-vented Shearwater	<i>Puffinus opisthomelas</i>		3	200	5			100	20	20			
12	Black Storm Petrel	<i>Oceanodroma melania</i>											6	
13	Magnificent Frigatebird	<i>Fregata magnificens</i>						1	25	30	50	200	100	20
14	Red-billed Tropicbird	<i>Phaethon aethereus</i>							2			1		
15	Brown Pelican	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	20	50	20	100	100	200	2	20	50	200	100	100
16	Brown Booby	<i>Sula leucogaster</i>										30	50	
17	Blue-footed Booby	<i>Sula nebouxii</i>							1			5	75	
18	Masked Booby	<i>Sula dactylatra</i>								1				
19	Double-crested Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>	50	20	20	20	40	40		5	3	10	5	20
20	Brandt's Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax penicillatus</i>	100	400	100	50	10	80	10	5	30	5	20	40
21	Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>	50			20	5	20		1		1	1	
22	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	30			20	10	20		1		1		
23	Snowy Egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>	20			30	6	10				30		4
24	Little Blue Heron	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	10				1	5				3		
25	Tricoloured Heron	<i>Egretta tricolor</i>						10				3		
26	Reddish Egret	<i>Egretta rufescens</i>					3	6				4		
27	Green Heron	<i>Butorides virescens</i>					2							3
28	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	50				4	20						
29	Yellow-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax violacea</i>					2	5				4		

	Common name	Scientific name	February/March											
			28	29	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
30	White Ibis	<i>Eudocimus albus</i>				5	20	20				1		
31	Black Brant	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	1	200	20	200	200	200						
32	Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	50											
33	Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	100											
34	Green-winged Teal	<i>Anas carolinensis</i>	50											
35	Blue-winged Teal	<i>Anas discors</i>	20											
36	Cinnamon Teal	<i>Anas cyanoptera</i>	20											
37	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	100											
38	American Wigeon	<i>Anas americana</i>	200											
39	Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>	100											
40	Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>	40											
41	Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	3				2	10						
42	Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>				3								
43	Bufflehead	<i>Bucephala albeola</i>	20					6						
44	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	30											
45	Surf Scoter	<i>Melanitta perspicillata</i>	20	200		300	100	200						
46	Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	1			6	1	1		30	20	20	30	20
47	Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	4		1						3			2
48	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	4		16		1	3			3	1	1	2
49	Northern Caracara	<i>Caracara plancus</i>								2				6
50	Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	1	1				1				1		
51	American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>	1											3
52	Sharp-shinned Hawk	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>	1											1
53	Cooper's Hawk	<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>	1											
54	Californian quail	<i>Callipepla californica</i>												25
55	Clapper Rail	<i>Rallus longirostris</i>					H							
56	American Coot	<i>Fulica americana</i>	50											
57	American Black Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus bachmani</i>		1	1									
58	American Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus palliatus</i>			4	10						1		
59	American Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra americana</i>	50											
60	Black-necked Stilt	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>	4											
61	Snowy Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>						20		15		10		

	Common name	Scientific name	February/March											
			28	29	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
62	Wilson's Plover	<i>Charadrius wilsonia</i>							1					
63	Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	40											
64	American Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis dominica</i>	1		5									
65	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>		3	30	10						9		
66	Semipalmated Plover	<i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>					9							
67	Greater Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>	10				20							
68	Lesser Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa flavipes</i>	2											
69	Willet	<i>Catoptrophorus semipalmatus</i>	50			30	50	50						
70	Wandering Tattler	<i>Heteroscelus incanus</i>			2									
71	Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularia</i>	3								1	5	1	
72	Whimbrel	<i>Numerius phaeopus</i>	20		5							4		
73	Long-billed Curlew	<i>Numerius americanus</i>	4	4	1	20	30	30						
74	Marbled Godwit	<i>Limosa fedoa</i>	100	200		200	300	300						
75	Black Turnstone	<i>Arenaria melanocephala</i>			20									
76	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	7					1						
77	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>				50		20						
78	Western Sandpiper	<i>Calidris mauri</i>	5			30	100	40				2		
79	Least Sandpiper	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>	20				30	30				10		
80	Long-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>	200					4						
81	Grey Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>		1	6					4		2		
82	Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>				2						3		
83	Heermann's Gull	<i>Larus heermanni</i>	3	4	20	20	5	5	2		5	10	20	
84	Ring-billed Gull	<i>Larus delawarensis</i>	100+	10			1	4				1		
85	American Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	100+				1	3						2
86	California Gull	<i>Larus californicus</i>	400+	50		20	30	40	30	50	30		1	20
87	Yellow-footed Gull	<i>Larus livens</i>									20	80	100	
88	Western Gull	<i>Larus occidentalis</i>	100+	100+	100	40	40	50	30	5				100
89	Royal Tern	<i>Sterna maxima</i>	20	5	1	30	40	100				20	10	
90	Caspian Tern	<i>Sterna caspia</i>		4		1	2	15						
91	Elegant Tern	<i>Sterna elegans</i>									1			
92	Forster's Tern	<i>Sterna forsteri</i>				1								
93	Xantus' Murrelet	<i>Synthliboramphus hypoleucus</i>										4		

	Common name	Scientific name	February/March											
			28	29	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
94	Craveri's Murrelet	<i>Synthliboramphus craveri</i>		10	2					2			4	
95	Cassins' Auklet	<i>Ptychoramphus aleuticus</i>		2000+	30									
96	Rhinoceros Auklet	<i>Cerorhinca monocerata</i>		12										
97	White-winged Dove	<i>Zenaida asiatica</i>								5	5		20	4
98	Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	20											
99	Common Ground Dove	<i>Columbina passerina</i>								2			10	2
100	Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	100		3									50
101	Greater Roadrunner *	<i>Geococcyx californianus</i>								1				1
102	Anna's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte anna</i>	15											
103	Costa's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte costae</i>								3	4		5	
104	Xantus' Hummingbird	<i>Hylocharis xantusii</i>											6	
105	Belted Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle alcyon</i>	1						4			2	1	
106	Gila Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes uropygialis</i>								2	2		1	5
107	Ladder-backed Woodpecker	<i>Picoides scalaris</i>								1	2		2	
108	Gilded Flicker *	<i>Colaptes chrysoides</i>												3
109	Ash-throated Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus cinerascens</i>								3	4	1		1
110	Grey Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax wrightii</i>								2	2			
111	Pacific Slope Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax difficillis</i>											1	
112	Black Phoebe	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>	2											
113	Say's Phoebe	<i>Sayornis saya</i>	1		1									
114	Cassin's Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus vociferans</i>	1											
115	Shore Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	6		6									
116	Mangrove Swallow	<i>Tachycineta albilineata</i>									2			
117	Violet-green Swallow	<i>Tachycineta thalassina</i>											2	
118	Western Scrub Jay	<i>Aphelocoma californica</i>												10
119	Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	2		30		2	2			2		1	2
120	American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	20											
121	Verdin	<i>Auriparus flaviceps</i>								5	6		2	5
122	Cactus Wren *	<i>Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus</i>												3
123	Blue-grey Gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila caerulea</i>								5			3	1
124	California Gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila californica</i>								1				
125	Northern Mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>			1					4	20		1	5

	Common name	Scientific name	February/March											
			28	29	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
126	Grey Thrasher *	<i>Toxostoma cinereum</i>												5
127	European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	30											30
128	Loggerhead Shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>												5
129	Grey Vireo	<i>Vireovicinior</i>									1			
130	Phainopepla	<i>Phainopepla nitens</i>											3	
131	Orange-crowned Warbler	<i>Vermivora celata</i>									1			
132	Mangrove Warbler	<i>Dendroica bryanti</i>						4				2H		
133	Audubon's Warbler	<i>Dendroica auduboni</i>	10		5									
134	Northern Cardinal	<i>Cardinalis cardinalis</i>											4	1
135	Pyrrhuloxia	<i>Cardinalis sinuatis</i>								3				2
136	Green-tailed Towhee	<i>Pipilo chlorurus</i>								1				
137	Black-throated Sparrow	<i>Amphispiza bilineata</i>									10			
138	Savannah Sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>			100									
139	Clay-coloured Sparrow *	<i>Spizella pallida</i>												5
140	Song Sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	4				2	10						5
141	Lincoln's Sparrow	<i>Melospiza lincolnii</i>			1									
142	Lark Sparrow	<i>Chondestes grammacus</i>								25				40
143	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	30		4									20
144	White-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>			10									
145	Chipping Sparrow	<i>Spizella passerina</i>			3					6				
146	Brewer's Blackbird	<i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i>	5											
147	Scott's Oriole *	<i>Icterus parisorum</i>												1
148	Hooded Oriole	<i>Icterus cucullatus</i>								10			6	3
149	House Finch	<i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>	30							10	10			5
150	Lesser Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis psaltria</i>								10				

*=Cabo San Jose airport only

151	Rough-legged Buzzards	<i>Buteo lagopus</i>	(seen at Chicago airport only)										
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	Common name	Scientific name	February/March											
			28	29	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Mammals

1	Gray Whale	<i>Eschrichtius robustus</i>		15	3	200	150	100	4	30	4	2		
2	Blue Whale	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>							15			10	4	
3	Bryde's Whale	<i>Balaenoptera edeni</i>											2	
4	Fin Whale	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>			3							1		
5	Minke Whale	<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>		2										
6	Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>							7	30			2	
7	Short-finned Pilot Whale	<i>Globicephala macrorhynchus</i>			40									
8	Bottlenose Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>				25	40	40		300				
9	Long-beaked Common Dolphin	<i>Delphinus capensis</i>				3				10	500	10	1500	
10	Pacific White-sided Dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus obliquidens</i>		9	6	2								
11	Short-beaked Common Dolphin	<i>Delphinus delphis</i>		400					200					
12	Dall's Porpoise	<i>Phocoenoides dalli</i>		8										
13	Harbour Seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>		25										
14	California Sealion	<i>Zalophus californianus</i>	50	5	70	2		2	10	10			300	
15	Guadalupe Fur Seal	<i>Arctocephalus townsendi</i>			50									
16	Northern Elephant Seal	<i>Mirounga angustirostris</i>		2	100									
17	White-tailed Jackrabbit	<i>Lepus townsendi</i>	10											
18	Rock Squirrel	<i>Citellus variegatus</i>	10											
19	Coyote	<i>Canis latrans</i>				2	1	2						
20	Black-tailed Jackrabbit	<i>Lepus californicus</i>								1				
21	Whitetail Antelope Squirrel	<i>Ammospermophilus leucurus</i>								5				