

Baja California & Sea of Cortez

Naturetrek Tour Report

22 March - 4 April 2012



Grey Whale watching



Humpback watching, Baja style



Orca pod



Baja Rattleless Rattlesnake

Report and images compiled by Lee Morgan



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Day 1

Thursday 22nd March

After a long flight from Heathrow the group finally arrived in cool San Diego evening, and we soon got everyone shuttled to the hotel.

After a long days travel everyone was ready for a good nights sleep and after very quick run through the planned itinerary for the next day we all retired for an early night.

Day 2

Friday 23rd March

San Diego Harbour and departure on Searcher

It was an overcast start to the day and after a leisurely breakfast most of the group headed out to search for birds and other wildlife around the harbour where we spent some time watching the Black-necked and Western Grebes cruising around the harbour shallows and searched for Song Sparrows, House Finches and Yellow-rumped Warblers in and around the waterfront gardens. We also managed to find a very obliging Anna's Hummingbird that sat and posed for photographs just a foot or so above our heads.

We all returned to check out of our hotel at about midday and wandered over to Fishermans Landing to load our luggage onboard the Searcher before heading off for a bite of lunch. At 2pm we set off for the afternoon on a long walk out to Shelter Island where we enjoyed the sunshine and had the chance to compare the differences between Ring-billed, Heermann's and Western Gulls, watched Royal, Forster's and Elegant Terns fishing in the harbour, and watched Brown Pelicans diving amidst a small group of Bufflehead. A scan across the beach from the fishing pier provided us with some close views of Surf Scoter, Great Northern Diver and even a Red-breasted Merganser and, while some opted to spend some time photographing the tame Brewers Blackbirds that pecked for scraps around the parked cars, most continued our walk to the end of the long peninsula before making our way slowly back to Fishermans Landing.

We returned to the Searcher early in the afternoon, giving everyone the chance to relax onboard, grab a coffee and a snack, and generally make ourselves comfortable on the boat. We remained on the boat for our informal introduction to the Searcher and her crew, and after taking the chance to grab a quick bite to eat in one of the nearby restaurants, we set off into the twinkling lights of the harbour night. A slow detour past the bait pens at the entrance to the harbour provided us with views of California Sea lions, Double-crested and Brandts Cormorants and lots more Great Blue Herons and Black-crowned Night Herons. Escorted out of harbour by a small group of attentive Bottle-nosed Dolphins, we set out into a very rolling pacific swell and an easy evenings travel southwards to Ensenada.

Day 3

Saturday 24th March

Ensenada & Isla Todos Santos

After an easy nights travel, few awoke to the sound of the slowing engines but, as we pulled slowly into Ensenada for our brief customs stop, most had made their way slowly to the outer decks. While Captain Art dealt with passport clearance, some took the opportunity to have a coffee and slowly wake up and to take in the sites and sounds of our first stop in Mexico. As always, the paper shuffling formalities were over quickly we cruised out of harbour as first light began to creep through the overcast skies. As we exited the harbour we were greeted by a group of playful Long-beaked Common Dolphins that playfully rode the bow as we made our way steadily towards Isla Todos Santos.

A brief cruise past Todos Santos Island provided us with some of our first sightings of Northern Elephant Seal as well as numerous California Sea Lions and a few Harbour Seals too. A scan along the rocky shore provided us with some great views of Brandts and Double Crested Cormorants, and Black Oystercatchers but our attentions were quickly diverted to a whale blow just to the south of the islands and we cruised over to investigate.

Our whale watching certainly started quickly! No soon as we had begun to cruise past Isla Todos Santos, we discovered a small group of northbound Grey Whales that we watched for a while as they slowly made their way around the islands. Well, it certainly started our day well and, as we continued our journey southward, the Searcher continued to act like a giant wildlife magnet and we enjoyed a seemingly continuous passage of Grey Whales, close encounters with some huge Fin Whales, a group of active Humpbacks that breached, tail-lobbed and flipper slapped, and even more fantastic common dolphin activity with a large group of Long-beaked Common Dolphins bow riding and playing around the boat in the clear, still waters.

The spookily calm Pacific Ocean also meant that we enjoyed some amazing views of large Ocean Sunfish, hundreds of Black-vented, Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters, Northern Fulmars, Cassins Auklets, Xantus's Murrelet, Rhinoceros Auklets and Grey Phalaropes. We also had and some wonderful close encounters with a number of Black-footed Albatrosses, some of which trailed close in our wake as we travelled, and two that sat on the water squabbling over a piece of fish. With so much going on, the time passed quickly and it was not long before night descended and we drew an end to the day's wildlife watching and retired to the salon for dinner.

Day 4

Sunday 25th March

Isla San Benitos

It was another early start as we enjoyed breakfast during our approach to Isla San Benitos. The seas were flat calm and a pre-breakfast encounter with a couple of Black-footed Albatrosses cruising around the back of the boat started the day really well. After breakfast a little effort with a bit of fish oil and a few handfuls of popcorn aroused a lot more interest from the Western Gulls trailing in the boats wake and it was not long before the clamour of gulls attracted the attention of about 12 more Black-footed Albatrosses that were soon trailing close behind the boat. What a great way to start any day!!

The Searcher anchored in the calm seas off San Benitos at 8.18am and the calm seas made for a gentle introduction to boarding the skiffs. By 9am we set ashore on the gravelly beach to start our days walk and circumnavigation of the island. While a few of the group opted to forego the walk and made their way straight to the Elephant Seal beaches and Fur Seal colonies, the walking group started off around the island. Once again the island was looking wonderfully green with flushes of flowering San Benito Tarweed, Blue Dicks and San Benito Mallow carpeting the dusty ground. Freshly opened flowers and newly formed fruits of Coast Agave, Cliff Spurge, Mammillaria and Red Barrel Cacti also provided a welcome display for the plant lovers and keen photographers.

After lunch we even managed to find some excellent displays of the islands endemic Dudleya too, a real treat for Lee and Rob who had been looking for the plant for several years! The keen birders in the group were kept occupied by the hundreds of Savannah Sparrows singing all over the island but with a little effort we managed to worm out a few novelty birds too with Shore Lark and White-crowned Sparrow added to the list.

The beaches all around the island were covered with a good mixture of Elephant Seals including newly born pups, weaners, moulting females and yearlings and even the odd young bull. But, as we walked along the north end of the island, it was the Ospreys that really stole the show and with at least 4 pairs nesting on the island we had plenty to see as they sat with chicks at the nest and swooped low over our heads.

The colony of Guadalupe Fur Seals was particularly good too and everyone was keen to spend some time down along the rocky shore where we could watch the groups of adults and young playing in the surf and squabbling for space on the rocky outcrops. Scanning the rocky shores we also managed to find American Oystercatchers, a few Black Turnstones and even the rare chance to take a closer look at a tiny Cassin's Auklet before we completed our walk and made our way back to the landing beach. After refreshing ourselves with delicious snacks that awaited us back on board the Searcher we headed out onto the Pacific once more and continued our way south towards Laguna San Ignacio.

Day 5

Monday 26th March

Laguna San Ignacio

After another delicious breakfast everyone took the chance for some early sea watching as we made our approach to the entrance of the lagoon. We passed through a scattered group of common dolphins as we travelled but they seem intent on feeding and were generally uninterested in the boat. Nonetheless, we did not have long to wait before we started to spot numerous Grey Whales and Bottle-nose Dolphins as we neared the entrance of the lagoon. The wind and tide had whipped the waves up at the entrance to the lagoon and as we slowly made our way towards the imposing surf, we found ourselves surrounded by whales and were able to watch blows appearing all around the boat as Captain Art carefully manoeuvred the Searcher safely through the large waves and over the shallow sand bar at the entrance to the lagoon. As always, the Searcher acts like a giant whale magnet as we set anchor in the lagoon and within minutes the boat is surrounded by whales, all vying for the chance to rub against the anchor line; twanging it like a giant guitar string as they do so!

Within ten minutes our three pangas were pulled up alongside the Searcher, and Victor, Chavalo and Maximo (our panga drivers) were aboard ready to take us out on the lagoon. There were obviously still hundreds of whales in the lagoon, with cow calf pairs now dominating the lagoon and for those of us that are familiar with these lagoons, we knew everyone was in for the time of their lives! We all got ourselves ready for our first 'up close and personal' introduction to the Grey Whales in the lagoon. Once again, this amazing place and its extraordinary whales did not disappoint and our first round of trips resulted in camera motor drives in overdrive and a frenzy of friendly whale behaviour observed. Most people enjoyed some incredible close encounters with whales and by the end of the day, everyone had had numerous opportunities to touch a whale or two!

As always, our break for lunch provided no respite from watching the whales as numerous cows with calves played around the boat. Once again, it was a truly wonderful day in the lagoon. After dinner we all went out onto the back deck of the boat and, despite the rather chilly night air, we were able to sit quietly in the darkness and enjoy a wonderful starry sky with Venus, Jupiter, Mars in full view.

Day 6

Tuesday 27th March

Laguna San Ignacio

After a good night's sleep at anchor in the shelter of the lagoon, and another hearty breakfast, we headed into the lagoon for some more time with the whales.

It was generally bright and sunny and while the whales were generally busy amongst themselves, a few showed some rather excitable interest in the pangas and, as we were shunted around the lagoon like a beach ball in a play pen by up to 7 whales at a time, we witnessed some wonderful behaviour in both calves and adults alike.

A trip to the mangroves on the edge of the lagoon provided us all with a much needed break from the excitement of the whales as well as an excellent chance to see some of the additional elements that the conservation of these fantastic lagoons bring to the area. A slow cruise through the shallow mangrove channels provided us with great views of Green, Great Blue and Tricoloured Herons, Reddish and Snowy Egrets, White Ibis, Long-billed Curlew, Marbled Godwit and Greater Yellowlegs as well as some wonderful views of Mangrove Yellow Warbler, Caspian Tern and even a fleeting glimpse of a Clapper Rail too.

More excursions into the lagoons provided us all with lots more Grey Whale encounters as well as the chance to observe plenty of breaching, spy hopping and even more friendly whale activity...

Our last panga trip of the day provided us with the chance to visit one of the pristine beaches along the edge of the lagoon, although many opted to take one last chance to see more of the whales. The beach group spent their time bird watching, enjoying the peace and tranquillity of the empty beach and photographing a myriad of beautiful shells, sand dollars and whale bones as well as spotting numerous Least and Western Sandpipers, Dunlin, and Grey and Snowy Plovers along the exposed shore. The whale watchers had their final magical encounters on the now still waters of the lagoon and even ended the day with a close encounter with a female whale (now aptly named 'Crazy Tail') and her calf who left everyone on board with a rather wet souvenir of their last encounter. We eventually left the lagoon late in the afternoon where, a few Bottle-nose Dolphins led us out into the Pacific and we headed south once more into the exposed ocean swells.

Day 7

Wednesday 28th March

Bahia Magdalena ('Mag Bay')

Having travelled through the night from San Ignacio we awoke at first light about 20 miles off shore from the northern point of the entrance to Bahia de Magdalena. In the glorious sunshine and light breeze it was easy to maintain a constant vigil throughout the day as we scanned the surrounding ocean for marine mammals and birds. As we travelled we enjoyed some wonderful close encounters with more Long-beaked Common Dolphins and the flat calm sea and blazing sky made it easy to spot the dozens of Pink-footed Shearwaters, Magnificent Frigatebirds, a Red-billed Tropicbird, Black Storm Petrels and hundreds of Grey Phalaropes as they passed us by. However, it wasn't until after lunch that we encountered our first whale.... and it looked really big!

We slowly approached the whale with some excitement and were very pleased to find it was our first encounter with a very large Blue Whale; an animal over 85 feet in length that rewarded us with some spectacularly fine views! From this moment on things went a little crazy, as we spotted spout after spout all around us. In total we estimated there to be ten Blue Whales in the immediate vicinity and we enjoyed close encounters with at least 3 different animals! We also managed a nice look at a Fin Whale too and even managed to stop to look at a Loggerhead Sea Turtle while we were waiting for a Blue Whale to surface. It was a fabulous travel day...

Day 8

Thursday 29th March

Gorda Banks and Los Frailes

We rounded land a little before sunrise, travelling along the southern tip of the Baja Peninsula. We spotted one or two Humpbacks and numerous Frigatebirds (a couple of which hitched a lift in the rigging of the boat for a while) and were even joined briefly by a couple of Common Dolphins as we travelled.

After breakfast we found a nice group of Humpbacks and followed them for a while to watch them as they fluked synchronously and passed close by the boat. We spent much of the rest of the morning watching humpbacks and found a few different animals that obliged us with some nice close breaches and a spectacular display of fluke slapping. After a rather disappointing first attempt to listen to the Humpback song with the hydrophone, we decided to try again over lunch. It was well worth another try and we listened to some amazing Humpback song as we enjoyed a great meal.

We continued our journey around the peninsula for much of the rest of the day, spotting numerous Humpbacks (including a couple of cow and calf pairs), leaping Mobula Rays and even a leaping Mako Shark as we travelled. However, it was a shout and flurry of excitement from the crew that really woke us all up and the excitement was justified as Captain Kenny had spotted a small group of Orcas cruising around way off in the distance. We were all keen to keep an eye on the animals while Captain Art carefully closed the distance between us and the small pod of whales. Our approach was a success and we were treated to some amazing encounters with the pod of five Orcas (which included a relatively young calf) as they travelled next to the boat, occasionally doubling back on us to travel close in our wake. It was an amazing and unusual encounter with these beautiful marine mammals, only rarely experienced by the crew, and the perfect conditions simply added to the whole experience as we were able to watch as the whales cruised below the surface in the crystal clear water.

After a superb session on the water (one that we were all very reluctant to leave), it wasn't until about 3.15pm that we eventually anchored at Los Frailes in the Cabo Pulmo Marine Park. We spent the early evening on shore looking for birds and plants around the RV park and encountered some amazing hummingbird activity around feeders near a parked RV. With a friendly invite from the campers to take a closer look, we couldn't resist huddling around the bright red feeders in hope of a photo or two. Both Costas and Xantus' Hummingbirds were still present and we all got some excellent views of these tiny colourful birds. There were plenty of birds around the surrounding cactus scrub too and with a short wander around in the searing afternoon heat we managed some nice views of Turkey Vultures, Grey Thrasher, Hooded Oriole, White-winged Doves, Common Ground Dove, Scrub Jay, Mockingbird and Northern Cardinal. After a couple of hours ashore we returned to the beach where the skiffs were ready to take us back to the boat and we raised anchor once more and headed out into the night, heading north into the Sea of Cortez.

Day 9

Friday 30th March

Isla San Jose

After a still night's travel north into the Sea of Cortez, we woke early, at anchor in a flat calm sea as a sunrise illuminated the beautiful sandstone cliffs of the adjacent Colorado Point.

After an early breakfast enjoying the scenery, we load up the skiffs and headed ashore for a closer look along one of the island arroyos and the chance to see the fabulous geology of the island. We spent some time looking for fossils in the rocks along the shore and managed to find a nice turtle shell fossil and a huge whale's vertebrae imbedded in the rock. A slow walk along the dry arroyo leading up from the beach provides us with a good chance to take a closer look at the unique island flora and to find some of the islands endemic lizards. The birding was a little slow in the intense heat and we do not stay in the arroyo for long, but we manage some good views of our first Ash-throated Flycatcher, more Costas Hummingbirds, California Gnatcatcher, Black-throated Sparrow and even a Verdin or two before we eventually returned to the boat and got ourselves ready for snorkelling. Snorkelling along the coral rich shoreline provided people with a chance to cool down and some amazing views of a variety of colourful fish and corals. The warmish water and great visibility made for an excellent snorkelling session.

After lunch we weighed anchor and headed out to look for whales once more. With a mirror like sea and clear sunny skies we could not ask for better conditions and it was not long before we were watching Manta Rays cruising around the boat, spotting our first Dwarf Sperm Whale, Spot Striped Marlin leaping from the water and watching as colourful Dorado cruised alongside the boat as we travelled. An approach on a group of Bottle-nose Dolphins got little interest so we cut our losses and continued our search. The flat calm seas made it easy to spot birds too and we watched the numerous Black Storm Petrels buzzing over the water, the Craveris Murrelets as they surfaced from their fishing dives and some even managed to pick out a few Least Storm Petrels too.

After a while we spotted a few distant blows and we headed off to investigate. As the sun lowered in the sky, and with Isla Santa Catalina beyond, we found ourselves watching a small Blue Whale as it surfaced close to the boat against the beautiful backdrop of another wonderful Baja sunset. We ended the day at anchor in the shelter of Catalina where, after another 'feature' presentation from Rob, we watched a large shoal of Greenjacks and Yellowtails as they swarmed around the boat.

Day 10

Saturday 31st March

Isla Santa Catalina

After a good nights sleep we set ashore for an early walk on Isla Santa Catalina where, after making our way carefully across the boulder beach, we began our mornings exploration of the islands' wonderful cactus-lined arroyo. By 7.30am in the morning the temperatures were already high and it did not take Brian long to find our first endemic Rattleless Rattlesnake; a solitary, pale coloured female tightly coiled in the sun and protected by a fortress of prickly cactus plants all around. As we all gathered around to have a closer look and to take a few pictures, Jez raised the alarm that he had found another, then Yvonne found one, then Lee found one, then Rob. Wow! 5 rattlesnakes in as many minutes...it was certainly turning out to be a good day for reptiles and along with all the snakes we also spotted spiny lizards, emerald tailed side-blotched lizards and even the odd desert iguana. By contrast the birding was a little slow to start (probably because we were all so excited about finding the snakes) but, with a lovely walk through the Giant Cardon and Wavy Barrel cactus forests we managed to get some good views of Verdin, Northern Cardinal, Ash Throated Flycatcher and Black-throated Sparrow as well as getting a good scope view of Loggerhead Shrike too. Lee also managed to make a fool of himself (a larger fool than usual that is) and spent almost 20 minutes calling to a Pygmy Owl that repeatedly responded but refused to show.

After a quick change back onboard the boat, about half the group took the chance for another snorkel while others opted for a crazy coastal cruise. Poor visibility and a lot of tiny sea nettles cut things a bit short for the snorkelers and most enjoyed an impromptu coastal cruise instead; one that got us some incredible close encounters with a group of bow riding Bottle-nose Dolphins. Excellent! However, it was not long before we set off once again for an afternoon of whale watching.

We quickly caught up with the Blue Whale that we had spent time watching the previous day. A careful approach and it rewarded us with numerous close encounters while we ate our lunch. In the flat calm sea conditions we spotted numerous Least and Black Storm Petrels, Red-billed Tropicbirds, Blue footed Booby's and even a pair of Craveri's Murrelets with a small chick. We headed north for a while and the glass-like sea gave us plenty of opportunity to watch the seemingly endless succession of Dorado, Yellowtail, Manta Rays and sharks (including Shortfin Mako, Scalloped Hammerhead and Thresher) cruising just beneath the surface of the water. We even happened upon a group of 6 Striped Marlin 'finning' side by side at the surface and were able to watch them at close range as they cruised just past the bow of the boat. Eventually the sharp eyed crew spotted a few spouts way off on the horizon and we started out approach to investigate.

It was quite a while before we were in range of the whales (and given that they had been spotted at about 10 miles range it is hardly surprising) but a steady approach allowed us enabled us to identify and get some amazing close views of a group of feeding Blue Whales (possibly as many as 8) and a Fin Whale cow and calf! All the whales seemed relaxed and indifferent to our presence, affording us some close views, including an individual that surfaced close to the front of the boat before performing a wonderful fluke immediately in front of the bow!

We continued to watch the whales for the rest of the afternoon and as the sun dropped below the rugged peninsula horizon we enjoyed an amazing sunset as we approached our anchorage for the evening, Bahia Agua Verde, and after dinner and our evening program of activities, we watched as swarms of mackerel hunted for krill around the boat.

Day 11

Sunday 1st April

Agua Verde

The Searcher remained at anchor off Agua Verde and after breakfast we headed ashore to look for birds and wildlife in the dense desert scrub and along the lush, palm lined water courses. A walk through the scrub provided us with great views of Phainopepla, Northern Cardinals and White-winged Doves while a prolonged stop at a small waterhole proved to be reasonably productive, giving us some nice views of White-crowned Sparrows, Black Headed Grosbeak, Lark Sparrows, Black-throated Sparrows and Cactus Wren.

After a quick trip back to the boat for refreshments, half the group opted to go on a crazy coastal cruise along the sheltered coast and take in the splendour of solitary rock and photograph the numerous Heermann's Gulls, Brown Pelicans and Cormorants. The remainder of the group opted to go snorkelling and, despite the fact that the visibility wasn't great, everyone had a great time looking for fish and invertebrates amidst the shallow rocky reef. Some even found a small octopus, various sea slugs and plenty of colourful fish and starfish.

After lunch we headed out for an afternoon making use of the wonderful sea conditions and headed out to search for whales. We soon encountered a large group of feeding Common Dolphins and we watched for a while as Frigatebirds and Pelicans swarmed over the 300+ group of dolphins. Later in the afternoon we encountered 2 separate Grey Whales (a very unusual sight that high up in the gulf) and we watched them for a while before setting off on search of more Blues. We managed to encounter 4 separate Blues during the course of the afternoon as well as two separate groups of Bottle-nose Dolphins too but it was an encounter with a particularly active Humpback whale that really provided the grand finale of what had been a truly wonderful day. The solitary animal seemed to have vast amounts of energy and, with Captain Arts careful approach, we were treated to a spectacular show of at least 14 repeated tail-lobes, and two spectacular breaches seemingly inches from the bow of the boat.

We anchored for dinner, and enjoyed a wonderful barbeque and margaritas on the back deck of the boat, and after dinner we shifted our position slightly as we moved south to anchor off the southern end of Isla San Jose.

Day 12

Monday 2nd April

Isla San Jose & Los Islotes

We awoke at anchor on the sheltered south-western end of Isla San Jose and began our day with pre-breakfast skiff rides through the mangroves where we got some extremely close views of Mangrove Yellow Warbler and Clapper Rail as well as nice views of Royal Terns, Tri-coloured, Little Blue and Great Blue Heron, Snowy and Great Egrets, Western and Least Sandpipers, Whimbrel and even a fleeting glimpse of a Northern Waterthrush. Both Aaron and Cole also managed to catch us a Balloonfish too and actively demonstrated the fishes ability to inflate its prickly body as a defence against predators.

After returning to the Searcher, we enjoyed a hearty breakfast and motored off once again, heading south for Los Islotes. The wind had picked up a little and we scanned the sea as we travelled, in hope of more whales and dolphins. We arrived at Los Islotes at about midday where, in slightly choppy seas we boarded the skiffs for a closer look at the wonderful seabird cliffs where we watched displaying Blue-footed Booby and got close enough to experience the sights and smells of the islands bustling California Sea Lion colonies. After an hour or so on the boats we returned to the Searcher and about half of the group prepared for our opportunity to snorkel with the Sea lions. Things were looking good and everyone was excited. The sea state had flattened off a little and the visibility looked good. There appeared to be no jellyfish in the water either! Everyone enjoyed a wonderful hour in the water watching the numerous colourful fish and having Sea lion pups and adults zooming all around us.

After such wonderful encounters, we all left Los Islotes on a high and as Searcher raised anchor and headed south once again, searching for more cetaceans as we headed for Cabo. However, with our first bit of wind of the trip, watching became difficult and most took the time to relax and prepare for our long journey home.

We continued our journey south, making use of every last minute of daylight to search for whales. We finished our day in a blazing sunset, before we finally retired to the salon for our last dinner onboard the searcher, during which we shared our best experiences of the trip and expressed our thanks to captain Art and his fantastic Crew.

Day 13

Tuesday 3rd April

Cabo San Lucas

We arrived at Cabo in good time and motored slowly into harbour as the sun rose. After a quick breakfast, we said our farewells and disembarked the Searcher and boarded our taxis, ready for our journey home. However with a longer wait until our flights back to San Diego, Captain Art and Lee had arranged for a minor detour on the way to the airport and we were able to spend an hour or so having a relaxed walk along the Estero (an International Ramsar Site and great birding site) in San Jose del Cabo where amongst numerous other things we had some amazing views of White-faced Ibis, White-throated Seedeater, Pied Billed Grebe, Bell's Vireo and Scotts Oriole

We eventually made our way to the Tropicana Hotel where some people enjoyed breakfast while we waited to be collected by our taxis. It was a great way to draw our amazing trip to a close and it certainly beat hanging around in the airport for several hours!

We arrived at the airport in plenty of time and prepared ourselves for the long journeys home...

Day 14

Wednesday 4th April

Arrival back in the UK



Black-footed Albatross



Blue Whale at the surface



Osprey returning to nest

Species List

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

	Common name	Scientific name	March/April											
			23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
1	Great Northern Diver	<i>Gavia immer</i>	2	✓	3	✓	✓							
2	Pacific Diver	<i>Gavia pacifica</i>		✓										
3	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	✓	✓	2	✓	✓			✓			✓	
4	Western Grebe	<i>Aechmophorus occidentalis</i>	✓	✓										
5	Black-footed Albatross	<i>Phoebastria nigripes</i>		8	12+	✓		1						
6	Northern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>		✓				2						
7	Pink-footed Shearwater	<i>Puffinus creatopus</i>		100+	3			✓	6		✓	2	✓	
8	Sooty Shearwater	<i>Puffinus griseus</i>		50+				✓						
9	Black-vented Shearwater	<i>Puffinus opisthomelas</i>		100+	100		✓	✓			✓			
10	Black Storm Petrel	<i>Oceanodroma melania</i>						15+	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	
11	Least Storm Petrel	<i>Oceanodroma microsoma</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓	
12	Magnificent Frigatebird	<i>Fregata magnificens</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
13	Red-billed Tropicbird	<i>Phaethon aethereus</i>						✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	
14	Brown Pelican	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
15	Brown Booby	<i>Sula leucogaster</i>								✓				
16	Blue-footed Booby	<i>Sula nebouxii</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓	
17	Masked Booby	<i>Sula dactylactra</i>						1						
18	Double-crested Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
19	Brandt's Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax penicillatus</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
20	Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>	✓	✓			✓				✓		✓	✓
21	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>		✓			✓						✓	✓
22	Snowy Egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>	✓			✓						✓	✓	✓
23	Little Blue Heron	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>					✓						✓	
24	Tricoloured Heron	<i>Egretta tricolor</i>				✓	✓						✓	
25	Reddish Egret	<i>Egretta rufescens</i>					✓						✓	
26	Green Heron	<i>Butorides virescens</i>					✓							

	Common name	Scientific name	March/April											
			23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
27	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	✓	✓										
28	Yellow-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax violacea</i>					✓						✓	
29	White Ibis	<i>Eudocimus albus</i>				✓	✓						✓	
30	White-faced Ibis	<i>Plegadis chihi</i>												✓
31	Black Brant	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							
32	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>												✓
33	Blue-winged Teal	<i>Anas discors</i>												✓
34	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	✓											✓
35	Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>												✓
36	Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>											✓	✓
37	Surf Scoter	<i>Melanitta perspicillata</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓							
38	Bufflehead	<i>Bucephala albeola</i>	✓											
39	Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	✓			✓	✓							
40	Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
41	Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	✓								✓	✓		
42	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
43	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>		✓	✓		✓						✓	✓
44	California quail	<i>Callipepla californica</i>								✓				
45	Clapper Rail	<i>Rallus longirostris</i>					✓						✓	h
46	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>												✓
47	American Coot	<i>Fulica americana</i>												✓
48	American Black Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus bachmani</i>		✓	✓									
49	American Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus palliatus</i>			✓						✓		✓	
50	Snowy Plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>					✓							
51	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>					✓							
52	Greater Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>					✓							
53	Willet	<i>Catoptrophorus semipalmatus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	
54	Wandering Tattler	<i>Heteroscelus incanus</i>									2	✓		
55	Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularia</i>	✓										✓	✓

	Common name	Scientific name	March/April											
			23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
56	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>				✓	✓						✓	
57	Long-billed Curlew	<i>Numenius americanus</i>		3			50							
58	Marbled Godwit	<i>Limosa fedoa</i>	✓			✓	40							
59	Black Turnstone	<i>Arenaria melanocephala</i>			✓								✓	
60	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>					2+							
61	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>				✓	30+							
62	Western Sandpiper	<i>Calidris mauri</i>				✓	300+							
63	Least Sandpiper	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>				✓	30+					✓		
64	Long Billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>					4							
65	Grey Phalarope	<i>Phalopus fulicarius</i>		✓				800		✓		✓	✓	
66	Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>				✓		✓						
67	Bonaparte's Gull	<i>Larus philadelphia</i>		✓										
68	Heermann's Gull	<i>Larus heermanni</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
69	Ring-billed Gull	<i>Larus delawarensis</i>	✓	✓										
70	American Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>					✓							
71	California Gull	<i>Larus californicus</i>	✓	✓	✓									
72	Yellow-footed Gull	<i>Larus livens</i>								✓	✓		✓	
73	Western Gull	<i>Larus occidentalis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
74	Glaucous-winged Gull	<i>Larus glaucescens</i>			✓									
75	Black-legged Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>			✓									
76	Royal Tern	<i>Sterna maxima</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	
77	Caspian Tern	<i>Sterna caspia</i>					✓							
78	Elegant Tern	<i>Sterna elegans</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							
79	Forster's Tern	<i>Sterna forsteri</i>	✓											
80	Xantus' Murrelet	<i>Synthliboramphus hypoleucus</i>		✓	✓									
81	Craveri's Murrelet	<i>Synthliboramphus craveri</i>						✓		✓	✓			
82	Cassins' Auklet	<i>Ptychoramphus aleuticus</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓						
83	Rhinoceros Auklet	<i>Cerorhinca monocerata</i>		50+										
84	Rock/Feral Pigeon	<i>Columbia livia</i>	✓	✓	✓									✓

	Common name	Scientific name	March/April												
			23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	
85	White-winged Dove	<i>Zenaida asiatica</i>								✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
86	Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	✓												✓
87	Common Ground Dove	<i>Columbina passerina</i>								✓			✓		✓
88	Lilac Crowned Parrot	<i>Amazona finschi</i>	✓												
89	Red-masked Parakeet	<i>Aratinga erythrogenys</i>	✓												
90	Cape Pygmy Owl	<i>Glaucidium hoskinsii</i>										H			
91	Costa's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte costae</i>								✓	✓				
92	Xantus' Hummingbird	<i>Hylocharis xantusii</i>								✓			✓		
93	Anna's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte anna</i>										✓			
94	Belted Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle alcyon</i>	✓												
95	Gila Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes uropygialis</i>								✓		✓	✓		✓
96	Ladder-backed Woodpecker	<i>Picoides scalaris</i>										✓			
97	Ash-throated Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus cinerascens</i>									✓	✓	✓		✓
98	Black Phoebe	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>	✓												
99	Loggerhead Shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>										✓			
100	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>			✓										✓
101	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>			✓										✓
102	Bell's Vireo	<i>Vireo bellii</i>										H			✓
103	Western Scrub Jay	<i>Aphelocoma californica</i>								✓		✓			
104	American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	✓												✓
105	Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>			✓							✓		✓	✓
106	Shore Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>			✓										
107	Verdin	<i>Auriparus flaviceps</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓		
108	House Wren	<i>Troglodytesaedon</i>	✓												
109	Cactus Wren	<i>Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus</i>											✓		✓
110	Blue-grey Gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila caerulea</i>								✓			H		
111	California Gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila californica</i>								✓	✓		✓		
112	Northern Mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	✓	✓						✓		✓	✓		
113	Grey Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma cinereum</i>								✓			✓		

	Common name	Scientific name	March/April											
			23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
114	European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓											✓
115	Phainopepla	<i>Phainopepla nitens</i>										✓		✓
116	(Mangrove) Yellow Warbler	<i>Dendroica bryanti</i>					✓						✓	✓
117	Northern Waterthrush	<i>Seiurus noveboracensis</i>											✓	
118	Yellow Rumped Warbler Audubon's	<i>Dendroica coronata 'auduboni'</i>	✓											
119	Common Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>												✓
120	Yellow Breasted Chat	<i>Icteria virens</i>								✓		H		
121	Black-headed Grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus melanocephalus</i>										✓		
122	Northern Cardinal	<i>Cardinalis cardinalis</i>								✓		✓	✓	
123	Black-throated Sparrow	<i>Amphispiza bilineata</i>				✓					✓	✓	✓	
124	Savannah Sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>				✓		✓						
125	Song Sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	✓											
126	Lark Sparrow	<i>Chondestes grammacus</i>										✓		
127	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓							✓				✓
128	White-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>				✓						✓		
129	Brewers Blackbird	<i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i>	✓											✓
130	Scott's Oriole	<i>Icterus parisorum</i>												✓
131	Hooded Oriole	<i>Icterus cucullatus</i>								✓		✓		✓
132	House Finch	<i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>	✓							✓				
133	Lesser Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis psaltria</i>	✓											

Mammals

1	Gray Whale	<i>Eschrichtius robustus</i>		20		✓	✓					2	✓	
2	Blue Whale	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>						10		1	8	4		
3	Fin Whale	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>		5	2			2			3			
4	Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>		10+	1			1	40			1		
5	Dwarf Sperm Whale	<i>Kogia simus</i>								1				
6	Killer Whale	<i>Orcinus orca</i>							5					
7	Bottlenose Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	12+			✓	✓			✓	✓	200+		

	Common name	Scientific name	March/April												
			23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	
8	Long-beaked Common Dolphin	<i>Delphinus capensis</i>		200+	103					✓		✓	400+		
9	Pacific White-sided Dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus obliquidens</i>			20										
10	Harbour Seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>		✓											
11	California Sea Lion	<i>Zalophus californianus</i>	50+	✓	✓					1	✓	✓	✓	✓	
12	Northern Elephant Seal	<i>Mirounga angustirostris</i>		✓	✓										
13	Guadalupe Fur Seal	<i>Arctocephalus townsendi</i>			200										
14	Coyote	<i>Canis latrans</i>				H									
15	Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel	<i>Spermophilus lateralis</i>								1					

Reptiles

1	Loggerhead Turtle									1	1	1			
2	Green Sea Turtle	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>							2		1				
3	Desert Iguana	<i>Dipsosaurus dorsalis</i>								1		✓			
4	Baja Spiny Lizard	<i>Scelpoarus zosteromus</i>										✓			
5	Side-blotched Lizard	<i>Uta squamata</i>			✓					1	✓				
6	Baja Rattleless Rattlesnake											5			

Fish

1	California Flying Fish	<i>Cypselurus californicus</i>									✓				
2	Mahi mahi (Dorado)	<i>Coryphaena hippurus</i>									✓	✓			
3	Manta Ray (Moghula)	<i>Manta birostris</i>										✓	✓		
4	Needlefish	<i>Strongylura exilis</i>										✓			
5	Remora (Suckerfish)	<i>Remora remora</i>										✓			
6	Scalloped Hammerhead Shark	<i>Sphyrna lewini</i>										2	1		
7	Striped Marlin	<i>Tetrapturus audax</i>										7	✓		
8	Yellowtail	<i>Seriloa lalandi dorsalis</i>										✓			
9	Thresher Shark	<i>Alopias Spp.</i>										1			
10	Shortfin Mako Shark	<i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i>										1			

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