



TRIP REPORT February 6 - 17, 2019



Photos: Xantus's Hummingbird, Grey Whale, Grey Thrasher, Munk's Devil Ray, Black-throated Sparrow – Group Todos Santos



# BAJA - 2019

6<sup>th</sup> Feb – 17<sup>th</sup> Feb 2019

## HIGHLIGHTS

Either for rarity value, excellent views or simply a group favourite.

- Xantus's Hummingbird
- Belding's Yellowthroat
- Greater Roadrunner
- Yellow-footed Gull
- Black-throated Sparrow
- Costa's Hummingbird
- Masked Booby
- Burrowing Owl
- Brandt's Cormorant
- Glaucous-winged Gull
- Magnificent Frigatebird
- Lazuli Bunting
- Blue Grosbeak
- Say's Phoebe
- Scott's Oriole
- Varied Bunting
- California Gnatcatcher
- Grey Thrasher
- San Lucas Robin
- Western Screech-Owl
- Gila Woodpecker
- Gilded Flicker
- Ridgeway's Rail
- Heermann's Gull
- Blue-footed Booby
- Wood Stork
- Thick-billed Kingbird
- Brewer's Sparrow
- Black Skimmer
- Black-vented Shearwater
- California Quail
- Green-tailed Towhee
- Black-throated Grey Warbler
- Canyon Wren
- Whale Shark
- Grey Whale
- Black Jack Rabbit
- Olive Ridley Turtle
- Munk's Devil Ray
- Ringtail
- Hump-backed Whale
- Bottle-nosed Dolphin
- Sally Lightfoot Crab
- California Sea Lion
- Desert Woodrat
- Espiritu Santo Antelope Squirrel
- Zebra-tailed Lizard
- Mexican Giant Cardon
- Creeping Devil Cactus
- Margarita's
- Todos Santos

## SUMMARY:

Baja California Sur is the southern part of the Baja peninsula which belongs to Mexico. Famed for its marine mammals and portrayed by the famous adventurer Jacques Cousteau and also home to several endemic birds and wonderful desert scenery we were set for a fabulous time. Starting off in a wonderful beachside hotel we could watch endless lines of birds flying back and forth and many shorebirds feeding on the exposed mud. Nearby the Sea of Cortez provided an amazing opportunity to not only see plenty of Whale Sharks but also for some the chance to swim with these gentle giants. We went in search of a number of endemic birds including Belding's Yellowthroat in the coastal ponds and Grey Thrasher and San Lucas Robin in the highlands surrounded by Mexican Giant Cardon (Cactus). A night on the Isle Espiritu Santo was an adventure and the old world town of Todos Santos was a favourite for many. We then finished this tour with a magical morning in the Magdalena Bay where some friendly Grey Whales came over to our boat to play and have a look at us. What an amazing encounter from these inquisitive mammals. Incredible!



## La Paz - 6<sup>th</sup> Feb

Today was a day of arrival and by dinner time our entire group had arrived in La Paz where we enjoyed seeing plenty of birds right in front of our seaside hotel. We all met for dinner and so the tour began.

## La Paz Sewerage Ponds - 7<sup>th</sup> Feb

This morning after breakfast we drove to the town of La Paz in order to meet up with our boatman ready for a pelagic trip out into the Sea of Cortez. It had been very windy during the night and was in fact still windy, so much to our disappointment the captain of the boat had to cancel the trip simply because they could not get the boat out of the harbor. So to plan B. We drove back towards our hotel and then continued just a short distance to the local sewerage ponds. It was a clear blue sky, the weather was warm yet windy so the smell of the ponds was sometimes overpowering. Our first birds were a group of **Killdeer**, followed by **Common Ground Doves**, **Clay-colored Sparrow**, a nice pair of **Vermilion Flycatchers** and a **Cassin's Kingbird**. A small puddle beside the cattle in a field held



**Greater Yellowlegs**, **White-faced Ibis** and a couple of nice looking **Cinnamon Teal**. Behind us the first watery pond held hundreds of ducks, mostly **Cinnamon Teal** with many gorgeous chestnut colored males, plus **Blue-winged Teals**, **Northern Shoveler** and a lone **Ruddy Duck**. **American Coots** wandered around and shorebirds included lots of **Least Sandpipers** plus a few **Spotted Sandpipers**. On the telephone wires were a flock of **Brown-headed Cowbirds**, plus **European Starlings** while in the fields we could see **Mourning Doves**. A **Merlin** was spotted perched in a tree top, and an **American Kestrel** sat on a fence while both **Red-tailed**

**Hawk** and **Northern Crested Caracaras** flew around. In the scrubby bushes we saw a few **Audubon's Warblers** and high in the sky flew a lone **Wood Stork** apparently quite a rarity here. The next pond we looked at held more ducks and shorebirds and we added a **Solitary Sandpiper** found by Deb and the first of about twenty **Buff-bellied Pipits**. Moving on we found another pool which was full of hundreds of **Black-necked Stilts**, about a dozen **Black-bellied Whistling Ducks** and some **Long-billed Dowitchers**. A female **Northern Harrier** flew past and a juvenile **Red-tailed Hawk** and several **Gila Woodpeckers** were seen. It was then time to head to a nearby restaurant for lunch. Afterwards we returned to our hotel and took a short rest before meeting up and going to check the scrubby edges to the mangrove. **Common Ground Doves** flew around, a pair of **Common Yellowthroats** was seen briefly and then we found some very smart **Lark Sparrows**. A pair of **House Finches** showed well and then a small bush held a couple of **Orange-crowned Warblers**. A lone **Whimbrel** walked around in front of us and then beside the hotel we got great views of three **Cactus Wrens** desperately wanting to be photographed. We then set ourselves up to view the exposed mudflats. **Tricolored** and **Great Blue Herons** showed well, a couple of **Reddish Egrets** danced around and **White Ibis** were feeding all over the place. A little further searching revealed a **Belted Kingfisher**, **Little Blue Herons**, **Snowy** and **Great Egrets**, plus a few **Yellow-crowned Night Herons**. In the distance were groups of **American White Pelicans**, plus **Long-billed Curlews** and good numbers of **Marbled Godwits**. Among the hundreds of **Semipalmated Plovers** was a single **Wilson's Plover**, plus **Western Sandpipers**, and many **Least Sandpipers**. We kept searching and added





**Western Osprey, Brown Pelicans, Double-crested Cormorants, Western Willet, Grey (Black-bellied) Plover, American Avocet, American Oystercatcher, huge Caspian Terns, Laughing, Ring-billed and Yellow-footed Gulls** and the ever present pirate of the seas the **Magnificent Frigatebird**. We then slowly dispersed with some people grabbing a nice cool drink from the bar and sitting outside as the sun slowly set and numerous birds flew back and forth. What a great first day of birds.

## *La Paz - Rancho San Dionisio - Los Barriles - 8<sup>th</sup> Feb*

Today we took breakfast and enjoyed the parade of water birds constantly flying past and viewable from our dining table. This morning a big flock of **Forster's Terns** was exciting and the **Black Skimmers** entertained as ever wheeling back and forth in a tight flock. After breakfast we packed up and set off towards Los Barriles. Along the way we made a comfort stop and while here we enjoying Mango and Guava empanadas and found some **Hooded Orioles** and a very quick flyby **Xantus's Hummingbird**. Moving on we passed countless **American Kestrels** sat on wires and a few **Loggerhead Shrikes**. Our first stop was at the zoological park in the town of Santiago. Here the old park no longer held animals but was being made into a nature and educational visitors center. We walked amongst the trees and soon found a group of **Western Tanagers**, plus the local subspecies of **Northern Cardinal**, followed by a showy **Ash-throated Flycatcher**, and then a couple of **Verdin Lark Sparrows** fed on the ground and then in a different part we of the park we got superb views of a **Thick-billed Kingbird** shortly followed by an **American Grey**



**Flycatcher** showing its characteristic dipping of the tail. We headed back to the vans and then set off towards a lake. A walk along the track had us spot a **Zone-tailed Hawk** fly overhead, then we noted **Orange-crowned Warblers** and a brief **MacGillivray's Warbler**. The track got too muddy to actually reach the lake edge so at that point we tried to see an endemic **Belding's Yellowthroat** that was calling. Unfortunately it did not cooperate and just a few people got brief views. Another **MacGillivray's Warbler** was also seen by just a few. We then travelled along a dusty track in rocky cactus country until we arrive at a small ranch where lunch was set up and waiting for us. The delicious homemade food went down very well with everyone and another **Xantus's Hummingbird** appeared and disappeared before we set off on a short walk. Here we got to see and hear a couple of **California Quail**, and near a clear mountain stream we enticed a lovely **Canyon Wren** to sing to us. As we left the stream a female **Xantus's Hummingbird** was seen well feeding on a flowering tree and we all enjoyed prolonged views of this special Baja bird. Further along we had a tree top with several smart looking **Western Tanagers, House Finches**, both **Scott's and Hooded Orioles**, a **California Scrub Jay** and finally a two **Lesser Goldfinches** before we had to leave and head back to town and our hotel. After dinner in a local restaurant we drove a few miles out of town where we were successful in getting fabulous looks at a **Western Screech Owl** and hearing several **Elf Owls**. The clear night sky made all the stars particularly visible this evening.



## La Laguna - 9<sup>th</sup> Feb

This morning after breakfast we set off on our drive into the mountains. Our first stop by the entrance to La Laguna had us take a short walk along the dusty road. A **Xantus's Hummingbird** was perched high on a dead tree and then we found our first group of **Lazuli Buntings** including a couple of nice males.



A **Pacific-slope Flycatcher** appeared and good numbers were seen throughout the day. A couple of **Blue-grey Gnatcatchers** showed and then **Acorn Woodpeckers** were seen, this race has birds with red eyes. A little further on we saw our first **San Lucas Thrush** an interesting and distinctly different looking species from the American Robin that it used to be considered a subspecies. More **California Scrub Jays** and **Western Tanagers** appeared, followed by **Ash-throated Flycatcher**, **Black-headed Grosbeaks** and the first of many **Black-throated Grey Warblers**. We also found **Wilson's Warbler**, **American Grey Flycatcher** and **Gila Woodpeckers**. Moving on we walked another track which was an almost dried up river with a small stream running through. A pair of **Gilded Flickers** was

scoped, and several **San Lucas Robins** showed well. Next up we got to see **Cassin's Vireos** and very brief **Grey Thrasher**. **Scott's Orioles** appeared then in one particular spot we enjoyed perched **Xantus's Hummingbirds** and a showy pair of **Varied Buntings**, plus **Black-throated Grey** and **Orange-crowned Warblers** and several **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**. As we returned along the river bed we got great looks at the endemic **Grey Thrasher** sat high in a tangled tree. Butterflies were varied and plentiful with many coming down to the stream edge. Back at the vans we loaded up and set off to another area. This time a completely dried up river bed where we parked under the shade of a tree and had our picnic lunch. A short walk in the area after lunch found us small flocks that included the same regular warblers plus **Warbling Vireos**, and then a **Spotted Towhee** and a **Rufous-crowned Sparrow**. It was then time to leave and head higher where another dried up river bed found us more **Acorn**

**Woodpeckers**, and good views of a **California Towhee** and **San Lucas Thrush**. It was now time to leave the area and head back. A pleasant coffee stop at an old mining village was a delight and the ice cream was wonderful. We then continued on our journey back to the city of La Paz.



## Whale Sharks - Isle de Espiritu Santo - 10<sup>th</sup> Feb

This morning after breakfast we drove the short distance to the office of our operators for Espiritu Santo Island. Once here we checked in and then got fitted with wetsuits, and snorkelling equipment. It was then down to the dock where we boarded our boat and set off slowly toward the distant shore. We were in line for visiting the feeding area of immature **Whale Sharks** and new protocol to stop too much disturbance by masses of boats means that now only a small amount of licenced boats can view the sharks at any one time. While we waited for the call on our boat radio to say it was our turn, we cruised the shore looking at **Double-crested Cormorants**, **Yellow-footed Gulls**, **Brown Pelican** and an **Osprey**. Two **Snowy Plovers** were found and then we set off on a wide circuit of the bay to waste a little time as our **Whale Shark** slot got closer. Eventually we were off and heading to an area of shore where firstly we spotted the fins of a pod of **Bottle-nosed Dolphins**. Then amongst them we saw the distinctive large round fin of a **Whale Shark**. This is the largest fish in the oceans and is not in any way



related to a whale, other than it is huge. The ones we were about to see were young and ranged in length from 9ft to 20+ ft. Our excellent captain manoeuvred the boat into position where we could get great looks at these huge creatures slowly drifting along with huge wide mouths and tiny eyes set on the side of the head. For those that wanted to, we then put on our wetsuits and snorkels and under strict instructions from our guide we entered the water close to one of the cruising sharks. Wow what an experience this was to be within a few feet of these gentle giants. We had several opportunities to go in with different size sharks and everyone got super close fantastic views. On the boat the **Whale Sharks** drifted right beside the boat offering all those on board also fantastic views looking down and seeing all the spots and markings. With our **Whale Shark** adventure complete we then dried off and set course for Isle Espiritu Santo. After an hour or so we arrived at a deserted sandy beach where our overnight camp was already set up for us! Not quite what we expected! In the end it turned out to be a great experience. After an orientation of the camp and facilities we enjoyed a delicious lunch and then after we met up for a short walk into the dry hillside behind camp. The geology and rock formations were fascinating and before long we were distracted by a smart **Side-blotched Lizard** and a couple of very smart **Black-throated Sparrows**. We then heard and tracked down a **Ladder-backed Woodpecker** and later watched a pair mating. A **Black Jack Rabbit** took flight and ran up the hill, apparently a rarely seen endemic mammal of Espiritu Santo. We then watched another endemic in the form of three tiny **Espiritu Santo Antelope Squirrels** playing and then chasing a **Desert Woodrat**. A pair of **California Gnatcatchers** appeared and then a male **Costa's Hummingbird** landed in front of us. We then returned back to camp in time for sunset, happy hour and a nice dinner. Just after dinner we met up behind the tents and soon spotlighted a **Ringtail** at member of the raccoon family. After we had all got to see it, it was time for bed!!!



### *Sea Lion island - Frigatebird island - Gull island - 11<sup>th</sup> Feb*

This morning after breakfast we took the boat around the back part of the island to an area of rocks where a **California Sea Lion** nursery exists. Here we drifted up close to the cliffs and enjoyed good views of many sea lion pups and a few large male bull sea lions patrolling the area. Immature Heermann's **Gulls** were seen and a few **Blue-footed Boobies**, while a **Wandering Tattler** walked amongst the rocks. We enjoyed watching the boobies dancing and raising their sky blue feet! Some of us then put on our



wetsuits and snorkels and went in and swam with

the young sea lions. There were plenty of colourful fish as well as the inquisitive sea lions. A great time! Heading back to a sandy bay we passed lots of superb **Yellow-crowned Night Herons** perched in the mangrove. We got out on a sandy beach and were soon watching a pristine **Mangrove Warbler** followed by **California Gnatcatcher** and a very smart male **Verdin**. Back on the boat we headed back towards our camp site. Almost back and there was a "blow" then a tail fluke, we waited and then very close to us a **Humpback Whale** blew and rose to the surface before diving again.

Wow! Back in camp lunch was nearly ready, an **Eared Grebe** was swimming just a few feet offshore



so Steve decided to walk out to it, and soon found that this little clockwork bird was not concerned in the slightest. With lunch over we had to pack our things and get going. More sea lions, diving pelicans and then on Frigatebird Island where we enjoyed hundreds of **Magnificent Frigatebirds** including several males showing off their bright red inflated throats. Moving on to Gull Island we found a group of **Blue-footed Boobies** plus a rarity in the form of an adult **Masked Booby** sat with them. Back to La Paz but not before a fantastic show of **Munk's Devil Rays** jumping clean out of the water and then belly flopping back on the surface. It was a spectacular event that enthralled us all. Finally a sandy spit held many **Royal Terns**, plus a lovely adult **Heermann's Gull** and some **California Gulls**. Another great day over we returned to our hotel.



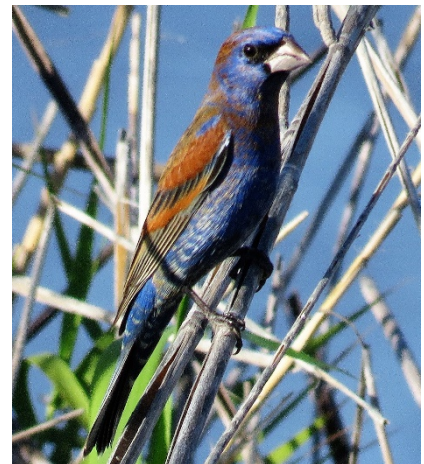
## La Paz - Todos Santos - 12<sup>th</sup> Feb

Today we left the hotel after breakfast and headed towards Todos Santos. Once here we checked into our wonderful hotel and then took a short cultural tour of this historic town. After lunch and a short



siesta we met up and headed towards the coast just a few minutes away. Here we walked beside a reed fringed lake. There were close views of **Eared Grebes**, **American Coots** and **Cinnamon Teal**. As we moved along the lake edge towards the beach and better light conditions over the pond we could see the spray of several whales seemingly very close to shore. We clambered over a couple of rocks and onto the beach where we were immediately confronted by the amazing sight of several **Grey Whales** literally just 50mt off shore. One of the first whales we saw was “spy-hoping” which means it was vertical in the water with its head sticking straight up and looking around. Other whales appeared and we must have easily seen about 20 individuals and I’m sure the number was much

higher than that. What an absolutely amazing sight this was and we stayed watching for a long time before making our way back over to the lake edge. As we crossed the dunes a pale raptor flew over which turned out to be a **Prairie Falcon**. Beside the lake we found several female **Ring-necked Ducks**, a couple of Lesser **Scaup**, **Ruddy Ducks**, a few **Redheads** and a lone **Gadwall**. A **Sora** showed briefly and then in the scrub we found **White-crowned Sparrows**, **Orange-crowned** and **Audubon's Warblers** and then a nice male **Blue Grosbeak**. Further along we spotted **Hooded Orioles** and a **Black Phoebe** before going to an area of





reeds where we tried hard to see the endemic **Belding's Yellowthroat**. After quite a while Gina spotted one high on the reeds but it soon disappeared. It then reappeared much closer but only a few people managed to see it. There were also **Common Yellowthroats** present as well as **Red-winged Blackbirds**, **Brown-headed Cowbirds** and a few **Northern Rough-winged Swallows**. This fabulous afternoon was highlighted by the amazing **Grey Whale** show, which was still going on as we left with the evening sun setting.

### *Todos Santos - 13<sup>th</sup> Feb*

This morning after a sumptuous breakfast we drove a short distance to a dry area of cactus scrub and took a track that led down towards the beach. Our first stop beside some swampy reeds produced distance and brief views of a pair of **Belding's Yellowthroats**. This is a much localised endemic species, and still not content with our poor views we tried several more spots until eventually a nice male **Belding's** showed itself very well to everyone. We then walked up onto the beach where a distant whale was seen to breach. Several **Zebra-tailed Lizards** were seen and then we found a male **Costa's Hummingbird** perched on a bush. Next up was a pair of **Green-tailed Towhees** that gave super views. Heading slowly back we found **California Gnatcatchers**, **Hooded** and **Scott's Orioles**, plus superb views of another male **Costa's Hummingbird**. After lunch in town and a short siesta we headed out to a hillside overlooking the ocean. This



cactus scrub soon produced many **Audubon's Warblers** plus a couple of very obliging **Black-throated Sparrows**. A **Zone-tailed Hawk** circled overhead and then down towards the cliff top we could see a couple of **Grey Whales** feeding close off shore. We watched these for a while before making our way back toward the vehicles. Almost back and there in front of us was a **Greater Roadrunner**! It gave stunning close views as it walked closer and closer and at one point it ran and caught a lizard and devoured it in front of us. Dorian was a very happy man!!! We ended our day with some very nice looks at **Gilded Flickers** and a group of **Lark Buntings**. Time to head back to our hotel.



### *Todos Santos - Magdalena Bay - 14<sup>th</sup> Feb*

This morning after breakfast we loaded up and set off on the long drive north to Magdalena Bay. We drove through endless dry cactus habitat seeing things like **American Kestrels**, **Northern Crested Caracaras** a **Roadrunner** and **Loggerhead Shrikes** along the way. We eventually arrived at Magdalena Bay where many **Osprey** nests were seen on top of telephone poles. After lunch we made our way to the shore where we boarded a truck that then backed us out to our waiting boats. We then set off across the bay. A small pod of **Bottle-nosed Dolphins** entertained us and then one of our boats had a problem so we had to stop and wait until a replacement boat came out and we could swap everyone to that. We were then off again and heading to an area near to Isle Santa Margarita. As we reached the area we could see multiple whale blows and before we knew it we were among many feeding **Grey Whales**. We enjoyed countless views of these beautiful creatures as they surfaced and





lifted their tails before making deeper dives. A few **Western** and **Heermann's Gulls** were seen and then a lone **Black-vented Shearwater** was spotted. It landed on the water and we managed to approach within just a few feet as it remained in the same spot. After a long time with the whales we had to leave and make our way back. Many **Brown Pelicans** and **Double-crested Cormorants** were flying to roost and then as the sun set in a glorious red/orange glow we passed a sandy island where thousands of cormorants were coming in to roost. What an incredible spectacle and end to our first Magdalena whale watch.

## Magdalena Bay - 15<sup>th</sup> Feb

This morning we had an early breakfast and then most of us set out on the boats to the same area where the **Grey Whales** were yesterday. Along the way we saw **Eared Grebes**, **Heermann's Gulls**, **Double-crested Cormorants**, **Western Gulls** and **Brown Pelicans**. The sea was calmer than yesterday and



when we reached the whale area we once again enjoyed many views of many whales. A couple of breaches were seen in the distance, the whale jumping out of the water and landing with an enormous splash. Our boatmen were put on a mission to find us some friendly whales today (not that all whales aren't friendly) and sure enough after following and viewing many close whales we came across a particular pair with a mother and a 1 year old calf that performed for us impeccably. They would surface just a few feet beside our boats, then swim under the boats, where we could look down on them through the clear water. Then on several occasions they would come up head first and look at us and even came up beside the boat until they were within inches of us, absolutely incredible. A few **Black-vented Shearwaters** flew past and after three hours at sea we returned to shore in plenty of time for lunch. After a siesta we went out to a nearby area of dry scrub where we found the "Belding's" race of **Savannah Sparrow**, and then a group of **Brewer's Sparrows** and a couple of **White-crowned Sparrows**. **Cactus Wrens** were also present and a **Loggerhead Shrike** showed nicely. Down by the water's edge we watched a flock of **Marbled Godwits**, **Whimbrel** and some **Western Willets**. A couple of **Western Gulls** sat on some floating bottles along with several immature **Heermann's Gulls**. We then drove to a little area of mangrove where we got good looks at a **Ridgeway's Rail** but a **Northern Waterthrush** was too quick for most of us. On the other side of the road we compared both **Lesser** and **Greater Yellowlegs** feeding beside a **Short-billed Dowitcher** and a count of 23 **Reddish Egrets** was just amazing.





## Magdalena Bay - La Paz - 16<sup>th</sup> Feb

Today we woke to a strong wind which showed how lucky we were yesterday with the **Grey Whales**. It



was actually far too rough for several other groups wanting to go out. After breakfast we headed to a sandy spit that held lots of roosting shorebirds and gulls. Here the morning light was perfect and we enjoyed superb views of hundreds of **Marbled Godwits**, **Western Willets** and **Short-billed Dowitchers**. A few **Western Sandpipers** and **Least Sandpipers** were also seen plus a lone **Grey Plover** and a **Semipalmated Plover**. Among the many roosting gulls were lots of **Western Gulls**, **Ring-billed Gulls**, **California Gulls**,

**Heermann's Gulls** and **Royal Terns**. A bit more searching revealed a **Bonaparte's Gull** plus an

immature **Glaucous-winged Gull** and as we were about to leave an **American Herring Gull** flew in. On the sea were a good number of **Lesser Scaup**, while **Magnificent Frigatebirds** and **Brown Pelicans** were ever present. It was time to leave and head to an area of farmland outside of town. Here we drove around the dusty track and soon found four **Horned Larks**, followed by a group of **Western Meadowlarks** and some **Loggerhead Shrikes**. Several **Violet-green Swallows** flew around and then a **Say's Phoebe** was seen. Continuing to drive slowly around the edge of the fields we found a close perched **Harris's Hawk** and in the edge of the grasses a **Greater Roadrunner** showed very well. We then moved on to another dry cactus scrub area where we watched with delight a pair of **Burrowing Owls** peering out from their hole on top of a sandy mound. A great morning we then headed to lunch and after this drove back to La Paz and our Oceanside hotel.



We would also like to thank everyone on this tour for making it a pleasure to lead.

Gina & Steve





# BIRDLIST FOR BAJA 2019

A = Number of species recorded on tour    B = Number of days out of 11 recorded    C = Highest daily count  
 H = Heard Only    N/C = No Count    C=Common

This list is in line with IOC WORLD BIRD LIST v(9.1) and as such names may be different than some of the field guides and other taxonomy's – additional notes including endemic subspecies see appendix \*

A	SPECIES	SCIENTIFIC NAME	B	C
1	Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>	2	10
2	Redhead	<i>Aythya americana</i>	1	3
3	Ring-necked Duck	<i>Aythya collaris</i>	1	3
4	Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>	2	30
5	Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	3	100+
6	Cinnamon Teal	<i>Spatula cyanoptera</i>	2	200+
7	Blue-winged Teal	<i>Anas discors</i>	3	40
8	Green-winged Teal	<i>Anas carolinensis</i>	1	1
9	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	1	1
10	American Wigeon	<i>Mareca americana</i>	3	60
11	Black-bellied Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna autumnalis</i>	1	12
12	California Quail	<i>Callipepla californica</i>	2	4
13	Pied-billed Grebe	<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	1	1
14	Eared Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	9	150
15	Magnificent Frigatebird	<i>Fregata magnificens</i>	10	400+
16	Brown Booby	<i>Sula leucogaster</i>	1	1
17	Blue-footed Booby	<i>Sula nebouxii</i>	1	30
18	Masked Booby	<i>Sula dactylatra</i>	1	1
19	Double-crested Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>	9	2,000+
20	Neotropical Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax brasilianus</i>	2	4
21	Brandt's Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax penicillatus</i>	4	20+
22	Brown Pelican	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	10	200
23	American White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>	3	100
24	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	3	4
25	Yellow-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nyctanassa violacea</i>	4	30
26	Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>	9	60
27	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba egretta</i>	10	50
28	Reddish Egret	<i>Egretta rufescens</i>	5	23
29	Tricolored Heron	<i>Egretta tricolor</i>	6	8
30	Little Blue Heron	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	4	10
31	Snowy Egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>	8	20+
32	Wood Stork *	<i>Mycteria americana</i>	3	1
33	White Ibs	<i>Eudocimus albus</i>	5	100+
34	White-faced Ibis	<i>Plegadis chihi</i>	3	100+
35	Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	11	30+
36	Western Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	7	10
37	Northern Harrier	<i>Circus hudsonius</i>	2	2
38	Cooper's Hawk	<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>	3	1

39	Harris's Hawk	<i>Parabuteo unicinctus</i>	1	1
40	Zone-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo albonotatus</i>	2	1
41	Red-tailed Hawk *	<i>Buteo jamaicensis suttoni</i>	9	4
42	Northern Crested Caracara	<i>Caracara cheriway</i>	10	10+
43	American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>	8	30
44	Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	1	1
45	Prairie Falcon	<i>Falco mexicanus</i>	1	1
46	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	1	1
47	Ridgway's Rail *	<i>Rallus obsoletus beldingi</i>	1	2
48	Sora	<i>Porzana carolina</i>	1	1
49	American Coot	<i>Fulica americana</i>	2	40
50	American Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus palliatus</i>	4	10
51	American Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra americana</i>	3	40+
52	Black-necked Stilt	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>	1	150
53	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	3	20
54	Semipalmated Plover	<i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>	4	500
55	Wilson's Plover	<i>Charadrius wilsonia</i>	2	1
56	Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	2	6
57	Snowy Plover	<i>Charadrius nivosus</i>	1	3
58	Whimbrel *	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	5	30+
59	Long-billed Curlew	<i>Numenius americanus</i>	3	8
60	Marbled Godwit	<i>Limosa fedoa</i>	5	150
61	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	1	20
62	Least Sandpiper	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>	3	300
63	Western Sandpiper	<i>Calidris mauri</i>	4	400
64	Short-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus griseus</i>	2	50+
65	Long-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>	2	12
66	Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularius</i>	8	20
67	Solitary Sandpiper	<i>Tringa solitaria</i>	1	1
68	Wandering Tattler	<i>Tringa incana</i>	1	1
69	Willet	<i>Tringa semipalmata</i>	4	50+
70	Lesser Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa flavipes</i>	2	2
71	Greater Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>	3	20
72	Yellow footed Gull	<i>Larus livens</i>	7	10+
73	Bonaparte's Gull	<i>Larus philadelphia</i>	1	1
74	Laughing Gull	<i>Larus atricilla</i>	8	100+
75	American Herring Gull	<i>Larus smithsonianus</i>	1	1
76	Heermann's Gull	<i>Larus heermanni</i>	5	12
77	Ring-billed Gull	<i>Larus delawarensis</i>	7	40+
78	Western Gull	<i>Larus occidentalis</i>	3	20+
79	California Gull	<i>Larus californicus</i>	4	10+
80	Glaucous-winged Gull	<i>Larus glaucescens</i>	1	1
81	Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	6	40+
82	Forster's Tern	<i>Sterna forsteri</i>	3	50+
83	Royal Tern	<i>Thalasseus maximus</i>	5	30+



84	Black Skimmer	<i>Rynchops niger</i>	4	110
85	Black-vented Shearwater	<i>Puffinus opisthomelas</i>	2	6
86	Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	8	N/C
87	White-winged Dove	<i>Zenaida asiatica</i>	11	C
88	Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	3	2
89	Common Ground-dove	<i>Columbina passerina</i>	6	10+
90	Ruddy Ground-dove	<i>Columbina talpacoti</i>	1	4
91	Greater Roadrunner	<i>Geococcyx californianus</i>	2	1
92	Elf Owl *	<i>Micrathene whitneyi sanfordi</i>	1	H
93	Burrowing Owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	1	2
94	Western Screech-owl *	<i>Megascops kennicottii xantusi</i>	1	1
95	Xantus's Hummingbird *	<i>Basilinna xantusii</i>	3	6
96	Costa's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte costae</i>	2	4
97	Belted Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle alcyon</i>	4	1
98	Gilded Flicker *	<i>Colaptes chrysoides chrysoides</i>	3	4
99	Acorn Woodpecker *	<i>Melanerpes formicivorus angustifrons</i>	1	8
100	Gila Woodpecker *	<i>Melanerpes uropygialis brewsteri</i>	10	6
101	Ladder-backed Woodpecker *	<i>Dryobates scalaris lucasanus</i>	2	2
102	American Grey Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax wrightii</i>	2	4
103	Pacific-slope Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax difficilis</i>	1	6
104	Black Phoebe	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>	6	3
105	Say's Phoebe	<i>Sayornis saya</i>	1	1
106	Vermilion Flycatcher	<i>Pyrocephalus obscurus</i>	1	1
107	Thick-billed Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus crassirostris</i>	1	2
108	Cassin's Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus vociferans</i>	3	4
109	Ash-throated Flycatcher *	<i>Myiarchus cinerascens pertinax</i>	4	4
110	Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	1	4
111	Violet-green Swallow	<i>Tachycineta thalassina</i>	1	10
112	Northern Rough-wing Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>	2	8+
113	Buff-bellied Pipit *	<i>Anthus rubescens</i>	2	20
114	Phainopepla	<i>Phainopepla nitens</i>	1	1
115	Cactus Wren *	<i>Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus</i>	6	3
116	Canyon Wren *	<i>Catherpes mexicanus croizati</i>	1	1
117	Marsh Wren	<i>Cistothorus palustris</i>	1	1
118	House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>	1	1
119	Northern Mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	8	4
120	Grey Thrasher *	<i>Toxostoma cinereum</i>	2	2
121	San Lucas Robin *	<i>Turdus confinis</i>	1	8
122	Hermit Thrush	<i>Catharus guttatus</i>	1	1
123	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	<i>Regulus calendula</i>	1	3
124	Blue-grey Gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila caerulea</i>	1	6
125	California Gnatcatcher *	<i>Polioptila californica margaritae</i>	3	4
126	Verdin *	<i>Auriparus flaviceps lamprocephalus</i>	4	4
127	Loggerhead Shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	7	10+
128	California Scrub Jay *	<i>Aphelocoma californica hypoleuca</i>	4	6

129	Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	9	3
130	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	4	200
131	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	10	C
132	Cassin's Vireo *	<i>Vireo cassinii lucasanus</i>	1	6
133	Lesser Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis psaltria</i>	3	4
134	House Finch *	<i>Carpodacus mexicanus ruberrimus</i>	5	6
135	Orange-crowned Warbler	<i>Leiothlypis celata</i>	6	20
136	American Yellow Warbler	<i>Setophaga aestiva</i>	1	1
137	Mangrove Warbler *	<i>Setophaga petechia</i>	2	1
138	Audubon's Warbler *	<i>Setophaga auduboni</i>	9	20
139	Black-throated Grey Warbler	<i>Setophaga nigrescens</i>	2	10
140	Northern Waterthrush	<i>Parkesia noveboracensis</i>	1	1
141	MacGillivray's Warbler	<i>Geothlypis tolmiei</i>	1	2
142	Common Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>	4	3
143	Belding's Yellowthroat *	<i>Geothlypis beldingi</i>	3	4
144	Wilson's Warbler	<i>Cardelina pusilla</i>	1	2
145	Western Tanager	<i>Piranga ludoviciana</i>	2	10
146	Lark Bunting	<i>Calamospiza melanocorys</i>	1	8
147	White-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>	2	4
148	Savannah Sparrow *	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis magdalenae</i>	1	20+
149	Clay-colored Sparrow	<i>Spizella pallida</i>	2	1
150	Brewer's Sparrow	<i>Spizella breweri</i>	1	30
151	Lark Sparrow	<i>Chondestes grammacus</i>	2	15
152	Black-throated Sparrow *	<i>Amphispiza bilineata bangsi</i>	2	4
153	Green-tailed Towhee	<i>Pipilo chlorurus</i>	1	2
154	Spotted Towhee *	<i>Pipilo maculatus castaneiceps</i>	1	2
155	California Towhee *	<i>Pyrgisoma crissalis albigula</i>	1	1
156	Rufous-crowned Sparrow *	<i>Aimophila ruficeps sororia</i>	1	2
157	Northern Cardinal *	<i>Cardinalis cardinalis igneus</i>	4	2
158	Black-headed Grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus melanocephalus</i>	1	4
159	Blue Grosbeak	<i>Passerina caerulea</i>	1	1
160	Lazuli Bunting	<i>Passerina amoena</i>	1	20
161	Varied Bunting *	<i>Passerina versicolor pulchra</i>	1	2
162	Scott's Oriole	<i>Icterus parisorum</i>	5	4
163	Hooded Oriole	<i>Icterus cucullatus</i>	8	10+
164	Brown-headed Cowbird	<i>Molothrus ater</i>	2	60
165	Red-winged Blackbird	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>	2	2
166	Western Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella neglecta</i>	2	6
	<b>Other sightings</b>			
1	Grey Whale *	<i>Eschrichtius robustus</i>	2	40+
2	Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	1	1
3	Whale Shark *	<i>Rhincodon typus</i>	1	10+
4	Munk's Devil Ray *	<i>Mobula munkiana</i>	1	20+
5	Bottle-nosed Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	3	25
6	California Sea Lion	<i>Zalophus californianus</i>	3	100+



7	Black Jack Rabbit *	<i>Lepus insularis</i>	2	1
8	Espiritu Santo Antelope Squirrel	<i>Ammospermophilus insularis</i>	1	3
9	Desert Woodrat *	<i>Neotoma lepida</i>	1	1
10	Cottontail sp ?	<i>Sylvilagus sp?</i>	1	1
11	Olive Ridley Turtle	<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i>	1	1
12	Ringtail *	<i>Bassariscus astutus</i>	1	1
13	Common Side-blotched Lizard	<i>Uta stansburiana</i>	2	1
14	Zebra-tailed Lizard	<i>Callisaurus draconoides</i>	1	6
15	Western Whiptail	<i>Aspidoscelis tigris</i>	1	1
16	Carmine Skimmer (dragonfly)	<i>Orthemis discolor</i>	3	N/C
17	Sally Lightfoot Crab *	<i>Grapsus grapsus</i>	1	10+
18	Wandering Glider (dragonfly)	<i>Pantala flavescens</i>	4	N/C
19	Rambur's Forktail (damselfly)	<i>Ischnura ramburii</i>	1	100+
20	Common Buckeye (butterfly)	<i>Junonia coenia</i>	3	N/C
21	Pipevine Swallowtail (butterfly)	<i>Battus philenor</i>	2	1
22	American Lady (butterfly)	<i>Vanessa virginiensis</i>	1	2
23	Western Pygmy Blue (butterfly)	<i>Brephidium exile</i>	2	C
24	Gulf Fritillary (butterfly)	<i>Agraulis vanillae</i>	2	4
25	Blackened Bluewing (butterfly)	<i>Myscelia cyananthe streckeri</i>	2	3
26	Mexican Giant Cardon (Cactus)	<i>Pachycereus pringlei</i>	11	C
27	Creeping Devil (Cactus) *	<i>Stenocereus eruca</i>	1	N/C

**Appendix \* These birds follow ioc list version 9.1**

**Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*)** – We saw one from our hotel on the mud flats and possibly the same bird the following day flying high over the sewerage ponds, we also saw another perched in a tree near San Antonio. This is a rare bird for this area.

**Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*)** – The race *hudsonicus* has been proposed to be split as a new species known as Hudsonian Whimbrel. It differs from all the eastern Whimbrels by having a dark rump.

**Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis suttoni*)** – The subspecies *suttoni* is confined to southern Baja California.

**Ridgway's Rail (*Rallus obsoletus*)** – This is a new split from Mangrove Rail (*Rallus longirostris*) which occurs through central and parts of south America. Clapper Rail (**Rallus crepitans**) only occurs on the east coast of the US down through the Caribbean to Belize. Ridgway's can be found from SW US to Baja California. The subspecies *beldingi* is confined to southern Baja California.

**Acorn Woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus angustifrons*)** – The subspecies found in Baja *angustifrons* is noted to have a red eye compared to birds with white eyes found in north America. It has been proposed as a possible new split "Baja Woodpecker".

**Gila Woodpecker (*Melanerpes uropygialis brewsteri*)** – The subspecies *brewsteri* is confined to southern Baja California.

**Ladder-backed Woodpecker (*Dryobates scalaris lucasanus*)** – The subspecies *lucasanus* is confined to southern Baja California.

**Gilded Flicker (*Colaptes chrysoides chrysoides*)** – The subspecies *chrysoides* is confined to southern Baja California.

**Western Screech-Owl (*Megascops kennicottii xantusi*)** – The subspecies *xantusi* is confined to southern Baja California.

**Elf Owl (*Micrathene whitneyi sanfordi*)** – The subspecies *sanfordi* is confined to southern Baja California.

**Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens pertinax*)** – The subspecies *pertinax* is confined to southern Baja California.

**Cassin’s Vireo (*Vireo cassinii lucasanus*)** – Another distinct non-migratory Mexican subspecies *lucasanus* is found only in the far south of Baja California, Mexico.

**Warbling Vireo (*Vireo gilvus victoriae*)** – The subspecies *victoriae* is confined to southern Baja California.

**California Scrub Jay (*Aphelocoma californica hypoleuca*)** – The subspecies *hypoleuca* is found only in central and south Baja California, Mexico.

**Verdin (*Auriparus flaviceps lamprocephalus*)** – The subspecies *lamprocephalus* is confined to southern Baja California.

**Cactus Wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus affinis*)** – The subspecies *affinis* is confined to southern Baja California.

**Canyon Wren (*Catherpes mexicanus croizati*)** – The subspecies *croizati* is confined to southern Baja California.

**California Gnatcatcher (*Poliophtila californica margaritae*)** – The subspecies *margaritae* is confined to southern Baja California.

**Grey Thrasher (*Toxostoma cinereum cinereum*)** – The Grey Thrasher is endemic to Baja California with two subspecies noted. We saw the subspecies *cinereum* restricted to southern Baja.

**San Lucas Robin (*Turdus confinis*)** – Formerly a subspecies of the American Robin, this distinctly different looking bird is now accepted by many authorities as a full species and is endemic to southern Baja California, Mexico.

**House Finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus ruberrimus*)** – The subspecies *ruberrimus* is confined to southern Baja California.

**Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis magdalanae*)** – The subspecies *magdalanae* is confined to southern Baja.

**Black-throated Sparrow (*Amphispiza bilineata bangsi*)** – The subspecies *bangsi* is confined to southern Baja California.

**Rufous-crowned Sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps sororia*)** – The subspecies *sororia* is confined to southern Baja California.

**Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus magnirostris*)** – The subspecies *magnirostris* is confined to southern Baja California.

**California Towhee (*Pyrgisoma crissalis albigula*)** – The subspecies *albigula* is confined to southern Baja California.

**Audubon’s Warbler (*Setophaga auduboni*)** – The Audubon’s Warbler was formerly part of Yellow-rumped Warbler which is now split into three species. The Audubon’s, Myrtle and Goldman’s Warbler. Audubon’s Warbler has a westerly distribution. It breeds in much of western Canada, the western United States, and into Mexico and is distinguished from the Myrtle Warbler by its lack of a whitish eye stripe, its yellow throat, and concolorous cheek patch.

**Belding’s Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis beldingi*)** – This new world warbler is endangered due to small fragmented areas of suitable tall/thick reeds and cattail. It is endemic to Baja California, Mexico.

**Mangrove Warbler (*Setophaga petechia castaneiceps*)** – The Mangrove warbler was formerly considered part of the American Yellow Warbler complex but this distinct chestnut headed yellow warbler is now a full species containing 34 subspecies ranging from extreme southern US through central America and West Indies to coastal central and south America. This birds preferred habitat is mangrove.

**Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis igneus*)** – The endemic subspecies *igneus* is only found in southern Baja.

**Buff-bellied Pipit (*Anthus rubescens*)** – The Buff-bellied Pipit is also called American Pipit in the US.

**Varied Bunting (*Passerina versicolor pulchra*)** – The subspecies *pulchra* is confined to southern Baja California.

**Whale Shark (*Rhincodon typus*)** – Not a whale but in fact a slow-moving, filter-feeding carpet shark and the largest known living fish species. Adults can weigh up to 60 tons, but we saw immatures probably half of this in an area that they stay for a few years while they mature.

**Grey Whale (*Eschrichtius robustus*)** – Grey whales migrate to the warm waters of Baja Mexico in record numbers during Jan to March. They'll spend several weeks in and around several lagoons on the west side of the Baja Peninsula, mating or giving birth, before making their spring pilgrimage north to the feeding grounds as far away as the Bering, Chukchi and Beaufort Seas an amazing round-trip journey of 15,000 to 20,000 km. Adults grow as long as 15 metres and weigh up to 35 tonnes. No other whale feeds like the grey whale. They're like giant vacuum cleaners, scooping up tiny critters such as amphipods, worms and crab larvae that live on or near the seafloor. The whale dives to the bottom, turns on its side, and sucks up a mouthful of critter-filled muck. Some of the mothers and calves in Baja are called friendly whales and readily approach boats to interact with humans, and incredible experience that we were privileged to witness first hand.

**Black Jackrabbit (*Lepus insularis*)** – The Black Jackrabbit is endemic to the Island of Espiritu Santo just off the coast of Baja California in Mexico.

**Desert Woodrat (*Neotoma lepida*)** – We saw what was probably this species interacting with three Espiritu Santo Antelope Squirrels while on Espiritu Santo island.

**Ringtail (*Bassariscus astutus*)** – Also known as Ringtail Cat is a mammal of the raccoon family and is native to arid regions of North America and Mexico. We saw one in the evening behind our camp on Espiritu Santo island.

**Munk's Devil Ray (*Mobula munkiana*)** – averaging about three feet in wingspan we experienced a magical time with lots of these rays jumping out of the water and belly flopping on the surface. One of the wider spread theories is that these devil rays perform this jumping ritual to remove parasites from their skin. Another theory is that males are trying to attract females and the louder the belly flop the better. In reality this jumping is still little understood.

**Sally Lightfoot Crab (*Grapsus grapsus*)** – is one of the most common crabs along the western coast of the Americas. It is also known as the "red rock crab". We saw several on the rocks around the Sea Lion island.

**Creeping Devil (*Stenocereus eruca*)** – Commonly known as The Creeping Devil it is a rare and fascinating species of cactus that is not only capable of cloning itself to survive, but also of detaching from its major shoot to move through the desert over time. Unlike most other species of cactus, which typically grow vertically, toward the sky, the creeping devil is different – it lies flat on the ground with only its tip slightly raised. As the cactus grows from the front end so the back end dies enabling it to move. This unusual species of cactus is endemic to the north-western Mexican state of Baja California Sur, and is the only known moving cactus in the world. The creeping devil is one of the most fascinating plants in the world, but it is currently facing extinction due to its rarity, cactus aficionados will pay large sums of money to add it to their private gardens.



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