

Southern California: Coastal Birding Species List | February 16-22, 2026 with Naturalist Journeys



Compiled by guide Greg Butcher. Our clients included Susan, Shirley, Sharon, Gene, Emily, and Barbara

“Southern” is a word most of us dream about in February, but the weather started out wet and chilly in Los Angeles and Santa Barbara. The rain chased us to San Diego, but then things got warmer and sunnier each day. We only missed one birding site because of rain, and we saw all the species we expected from that stop. We kept looking for signs of spring, and we discovered quite a few, while also enjoying many species that only spend the winter in Southern California. We divided our time between the ocean and inland and produced a very respectable bird (and mammal!) list in a fun week in the Southern California Bight.

BIRDS: -- (151)

The eBird link below details the 151 species of birds our group observed during the tour. If you’re new to eBird, be sure to click “Show All Details” on the right side of the list to expand the report and reveal where and when each of the birds were seen and how many.

[Southern California: Coastal Birding | February 16-22, 2026 | eBird Trip Report](#)

Following is a list of the mammals we were fortunate to observe during the trip.

Family or Species Common Name *Scientific Name* — (# of species)

MAMMALS: — (7)

California Ground Squirrel *Otospermophilus beecheyi* — These were seen scurrying around on several days.

Coyote *Canis latrans* — We saw coyotes at Bolsa Chica in the rain and in the coastal sage-scrub habitat near Lake Hodges. TV cartoon fans were happy that we had both coyotes and roadrunners at Lake Hodges.

California Sea Lion *Zalophus californianus* — California Sea Lions were surprisingly common on both boat trips and also on the rocks at Point La Jolla. When they were rushing through the water, they looked similar to Common Dolphins. Not so much when they were on the rocks.

Mule Deer *Odocoileus hemionus* — We had Mule Deer on several days, but always from the van.

Humpback Whale *Megaptera novaeangliae* — There were a pair of Humpback Whales swimming together off Santa Cruz Island in the big feeding frenzy and a single individual off the coast of San Diego.

Gray Whale *Eschrichtius robustus* — We had 3 Gray Whales swimming together off the coast of San Diego. The captain kept us close for quite a while.

Common Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus* — These were the most common marine mammals off both the Santa Barbara and San Diego coasts.