

Quick Overview – August is a hot summer month here in California's Santa Clara Valley, so **Let's Go Birding** usually heads to Big Sur at this time to look for North America's largest bird, the California Condor. This was a difficult year for the Big Sur vultures & numbers around Big Sur currently run around 30. We started our birding in Moss Landing and found Elegant Turns in great numbers. With Monterey Bay reportedly full of anchovies we walked out to the bay waters and witnessed for ourselves the reported Humpback Whales. There was a lot of water slapping, diving and whale tails. Once along Jetty Road we found lots of shorebirds probing the mud and we pulled a Red Knot out of the crowd! We feel we also had a Baird's Sandpiper before it flew so it went on the list! Then we moved on to the Ventana Wildlife Society's Discovery Center where we found Andy waiting for us. It was here we had lunch, learned more about condors and spent some money in the shop. It wasn't very birdy around the center so we packed up and headed south. We did stop for Black Swifts and continued on and found condors sitting in a tree along highway 1. As we enjoyed the birds folks without optics pulled up and asked to look through our scopes. Of course we shared the view and also had a chance to educate everyone on the history around saving this species. We watched the condors take off from the tree and some came back around. All adult birds -it was exciting, but we needed to get home. I put out a coffee can on trips like this to raise a little money for the folks working to save the species we got to enjoy. With a match from Let's Go Birding, we collected \$160 for the Ventana Wildlife Society. Thank you all!

Birds Experienced –

- Canada Goose
- Surf Scoter
- Mallard
- Wild Turkey
- Pacific Loon
- Pied-billed Grebe
- Western Grebe
- Sooty Shearwaters
- Pelagic Cormorant
- Brandt's Cormorant
- Double-crested Cormorant
- Brown Pelican
- American White Pelican
- Great Blue Heron
- Great Egret
- Snowy Egret
- Black Crowned Night Heron
- California Condor**
- Turkey Vulture
- Osprey
- White-tail Kite
- Red-tail Hawk
- Killdeer
- Black-bellied Plover
- Semipalmated Plover
- Black-necked Stilt
- American Avocets
- Willet
- Long-billed Curlew
- Marbled Godwit
- Sanderling
- Least Sandpipers
- Western Sandpiper
- Baird's Sandpiper
- Red Knot
- Dowitcher
- Wilson's Phalarope
- Ring-billed Gull
- Heermann's Gull
- Western Gull
- Caspian Tern
- Elegant Tern
- Common Murre
- Pigeon Guillemot
- Rock Pigeon
- Band Tailed Pigeon
- Eurasian Collared Dove
- Mourning Dove
- Black Swift
- Vaux's Swift
- Anna's Hummingbird
- Belted Kingfisher (h)
- Northern Flicker (h)
- Acorn Woodpecker
- Downy Woodpecker
- American Kestrel
- Peregrine Falcon
- Western Scrub-Jay
- Steller's Jay
- American Crow
- Common Raven
- Tree Swallow
- Barn Swallow
- Violet Green Swallow
- Chestnut Backed Chickadee
- Oak Titmouse
- Bushtit
- House Wren (h)
- Western Bluebird
- European Starling
- Orange Crowned Warbler
- Spotted Towhee (h)
- White Crowned Sparrow
- Savannah Sparrow
- Dark-eyed Junco
- Red-winged Blackbird
- House Finch
- Lesser Goldfinch
- Heard Only = (h)



Pictures from our day – Pigeon Guillemot fly by, Common Murre on rocks and soaring California Condor - Douglas Joo / Close-up view of #171 "Traveler" - Julie Bryson / A view of the trees with California Condors and the on lookers below – Lisa Myers