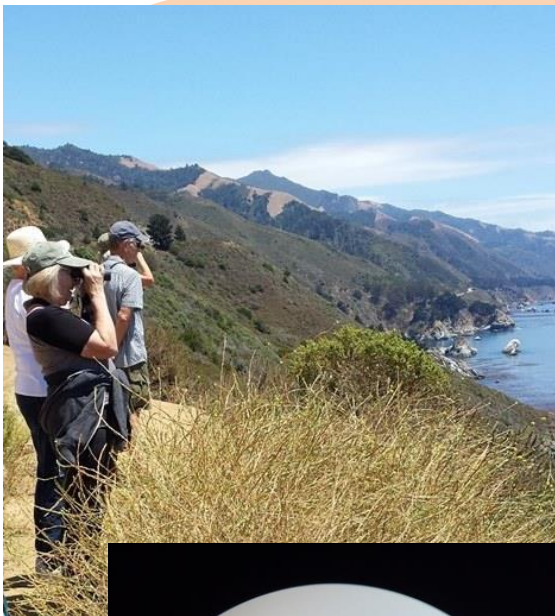


Quick Overview – Every summer we try and make a trip to Big Sur to look for California Condors. It is here that a population of roughly 30 California Condors can be found. There are another 30 birds living nearby in the open spaces around Pinnacles. At one time you could find California Condors from California to New York, but their numbers started to drop long ago and eventually they could only be found in the wild places around Los Angeles. Then in 1987, in an effort to save the species from extinction, the remaining 22 condors were captured and placed in a protective breeding program. For our day, we filled the bus with eager birders and headed over the Santa Cruz Mountains with our first stop at Moss Landing. Here we found a large flock of Elegant Terns numbering in the hundreds. A Caspian or two, plus some Forster's Terns were also present. One single Brandt's Goose was also in lifer for many. A Killdeer on the distant shoreline was a nice spot. With protective parents near, a Western Gull chick, born right there in the parking lot, was a favorite for some on the trip. We also observed California Sea Lions, Harbor Seals and sea otters. Soon we headed to the Ventana Wildlife Society's Discovery Center where we took a short walk from the horse stables to the center. We found a Wilson's Warbler and a Pacific Slope Flycatcher in amongst the creekside. At one point we heard an Olive Sided Flycatcher, a first for many this season. The Discovery Center provides this history of information about the efforts to save North America's largest vulture. You can also buy souvenirs and some cool t-shirts! We then continued south to the area around Julia Pfeiffer Burns State and parked along highway 1, but no matter how hard we tried we could not find our target species. We turned around and headed north with a stop near the Big Sur Inn. It was here we found a family of Purple Martins. Both parents were busily feeding their newly fledged chicks. As is always the case on a condor trip, **Let's Go Birding** & the **Los Gatos Birdwatcher** put out a collection can allowing trip participants the opportunity to donate to the Ventana Wildlife Society. We also match funds and it makes for a great day.

Birds Experienced –	
Brandt's Goose	Common Murre
Brandt's Cormorant	Pigeon Guillemot
Pelagic Cormorant	Band Tailed Pigeon
Double-crested Cormoran	Rock Pigeon
Brown Pelican	Eurasian Collared Dove
Great Blue Heron	White Throated Swift
Great Egret	Northern Flicker (H)
Snowy Egret	Acorn Woodpecker
Golden Eagle (R)	Olive Sided Flycatcher (H)
Turkey Vulture	Pacific Slope Flycatcher
Red-tail Hawk	Black Phoebe
Cooper's Hawk	Steller's Jay
Killdeer	Western Scrub Jay
Willet	American Crow
Long-billed Curlew	Common Raven
Marbled Godwit	Barn Swallow
California Gull	Cliff Swallow
Heermann's Gull	Purple Martin
Western Gull	Wrentit (h)
Glaucous Wing Gull	Western Bluebird
Forster's Tern	Wilson's Warbler
Elegant Tern	Spotted Towhee
Caspian Tern	Dark-eyed Junco
	Lesser Goldfinch
	Heard Only = (h)



Pictures from our day – Scanning the Pacific Ocean from the cliffs of Big Sur, CA / Tide coming in at Moss Landing, CA. / The group enjoying views of the Purple Martin family over the Big Sur Lodge all taken by Lisa Myers / Protective Western Gull parents protecting spotted gull chick – Freddy Howell