

For my work, I have to travel often to the USA. The sites where I usually go are in the Boston area, MA; Buffalo, NY; Alabama, Florida and more recently the Los Angeles area, CA.

When my wife is on vacation and can come with me, I then take the opportunity of those travels to stay longer over week ends and then visit some places not far from where I work for both bird watching and mammal watching.

2016 was a prolific year as we could visit several places from spring to fall. We started in April with the visit of Cape Cod (2 days). We slept in Orleans from where we could easily drive to Chatham to look for seals, especially visiting Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge. We saw both harbor and gray seals. We also did some whale watching from Provincetown with Dolphin WhaleWatch: it was good but not very diversified with only a few humpback and Minke whales seen.

Early in July and thanks to a report written by Jon Hall, we went to Rhode Island to visit Trustom Pond National Wildlife Refuge (1 day). This is a nice little park with surprisingly a lot of wildlife: both birds and mammals. We saw New England cottontails and several small rodents. The day after, we did another whale watching but from Gloucester, MA with 7 Seas WhaleWatch. Again a nice tour with nice weather but not much seen besides humpback whales.

Later in July, we went to Millinocket in Maine to visit Baxter State Park (2 days). It is a long drive from Worcester to get there but doable over the week end. We booked a private tour with Bryant Davis from Maine Quest Adventures with the target to see moose and bear. We only saw moose (and other smaller mammals) but the canoe tour we did with Bryant through several small lakes was very pleasant and approaching quietly moose by canoe is a great experience.

In August, I took some days off to make a very long week end visiting the California coast between San Francisco down to LA (5 days). We visited and did the following during this trip, trying to maximize our chance to see as many different mammals as possible: Big Basin Redwoods State Park / Año Nuevo State Park / Moss Landing / Whale watching in Monterey with Monterey Bay WhaleWatch recommended in several of Jon Hall's reports / Pinnacles NP / Panoche Valley & Mercey Hot Springs at night thanks to the detailed indications provided by Venkat Sankar and Vladimir Dinets in some of their reports / Pacific Highway 1 / Piedras Blancas / Another whale watching from Ventura with Island Packers and Santaz Cruz in Channel Island NP with the help of Cheryl Antonucci's report. This was a great trip with many different marine mammals observed including some nice blue whale sightings and the cute sea otters and Santa Cruz Island foxes. On the other hand, even after 5 days, we were far from reaching the number of mammals that some managed to see within 24h during their Big Mammal Day ☺

Finally, in October, we went to Florida for a long week end (3 days) primarily for bird watching visiting the Everglades NP, Fort Myers, Cape Coral and Lakeland. However, we also went to Crystal River to swim with manatees, an experience that we had many years ago and that I wanted to renew. I was not disappointed: manatees are so cute and gentle to swim with. We did the tour with Bird's Underwater. Since October is not the high season for manatees (they rather concentrate to the hot springs during winter: January-March), we were the only ones on the boat and thus we had a private tour. So cool !!

So, after 14 days of mammal watching throughout the USA, we managed to see 25 different mammals, which I think is not such a great score but several species were lifers for us and such trips weren't exactly wildlife ones per se but rather side trips from work. I won't complain... One point to mention is that during our night drive at the Panoche Valley, CA, in addition to one Kit-fox we clearly identified, we also saw a couple of kangaroo-rats but they were too quick and we could not take a picture nor identify which species they were. When we drove after from Panoche Valley towards Mercey Hot Springs, we saw tens of suicidal rodents that were crossing the road in front of our car. Given the color and shape differences, I can state we saw several species but again I'm unable to tell which ones...

Mammals seen in New England				
Species	Espèces	Latin Name	Where seen	Pic
Moose	Elan	<i>Alces americanus</i>	6 seen in Maine	X
White-tailed deer	Cerf de Virginie	<i>Odocoileus v. borealis</i>	1 seen in Maine	X
Eastern chipmunk	Chipmunk strié d'Amérique de l'Est	<i>Tamias striatus</i>	Common in Maine and RI	X
American Red Squirrel	Ecureuil de l'Hudson	<i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>	A few seen in Maine	X
Eastern Gray Squirrel	Ecureuil gris de Caroline	<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>	Common in Maine, RI and MA	X
Southern bog lemming	Campagnol-lemming du Sud	<i>Synaptomys cooperi</i>	Several in Trustom Pond, RI	X
New England cottontail	Lapin de Nvle Angleterre	<i>Sylvilagus transitionalis</i>	Several in Trustom Pond, RI	X
Humpback whale	Baleine à bosse	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	Several seen from Gloucester and Cape Cod	X
Minke whale	Baleine de Minke	<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>	2 seen from Cape Cod	X
Harbor Seal	Veau marin commun	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	A few in Monomoy state park	X
Gray Seal	Phoque gris	<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>	Common in Chatam harbour	X
Mammals seen in California				
Western Gray Squirrel	Ecureuil gris occidental	<i>Sciurus griseus</i>	2 in Big Basin Redwoods park	

Kit Fox	Kit-fox à grandes oreilles	<i>Vulpes macrotis</i>	1 at Panoche Valley	
Island Fox	Renard des îles	<i>Urocyon littoralis</i>	5 in Santa Cruz Island	X
California ground squirrel	Spermophile de Californie	<i>Spermophilus beecheyi</i>	Common along Pacific Highway	X
Sea otter	Loutre de mer	<i>Enhydra lutris</i>	Common in Moss Landing and Monterey	X
Bottlenose Dolphin	Grand dauphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	4 around Channel Island	X
Long-beaked common dolphin	Dauphin commun à long bec	<i>Delphinus capensis</i>	Common around Channel Islands	X
Harbor Porpoise	Marsouin commun	<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	1 glimpse in Monterey	
Blue whale	Grande Baleine Bleue	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>	2 in Monterey and 1 around Channel Islands	X
Humpback whale	Baleine à bosse	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	Common in Monterey	X
Fin whale	Rorqual commun	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>	3 seen around Channel Islands	X
Harbor Seals	Veau marin commun	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	A group in Moss Landing	X
California sea lion	Lion de mer de Californie	<i>Zalophus californianus</i>	Common in San Francisco, Monterey and Ventura	X
Steller's sea lion	Lion de mer de Steller	<i>Eumetopias jubatus</i>	5 on island off Año Nuevo park	X
Northern elephant seal	Elephant de mer Septentrional	<i>Mirounga angustirostris</i>	A lot in Año Nuevo park and Piedras Blancas	X
Mammals seen in Florida				
Manatee	Lamantin d'Amérique	<i>Trichechus manatus</i>	Tenth in Crystal River	X
Total Species Recorded = 25				

I'm adding to this report a few pictures of some iconic species we observed during those trips or that were new to me.



California Sea Lion



Fin whale



Humpback whales



Harbor Seals



Northern Elephant seal

S@my



Sea otter

S@my



Steller's sea lions



Santa Cruz Island Fox

S@my



White-tailed deer

M@Pi



Moose

M@Pi



Gray seal



Long-beaked common dolphin



Southern bog lemming



New England Cottontail



Eastern Chipmunk



Manatee