



Bobcats of California Photo Tour 2022 – Trip Summary

Bobcat tour dates: December 15th January 18th, 2022

Group: Sebastian Kennerknecht and Rachel Tobias as trip leaders. Daniel Dietrich was our west Marin local guide, and we had six cat expedition guests, two of which were non-photographers.



Highlights of the Trips

Bobcats: In total, we photographed twelve different bobcats, by far a record for this tour. Sightings averaged fifteen minutes, at an average distance of 25 meters. For our closest encounter, we had the bobcat at just two meters!



Coyotes: After twenty individual coyotes, we stopped counting. We had great sightings including watching a few hunts!



Tule Elk: Tule elk are a subspecies of elk, endemic to California. Though not hard to find, we always enjoy them. We had a great sunset session with them one evening.



Great Horned Owls: We always keep an eye out for great horned owls on this tour, and so far, we have never been disappointed! On this trip we saw one pair.



Bobcats of California Photo Tour Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in San Francisco. Drive one hour to our hotel in southern Marin county. Settle in, go out for our first bobcat safari, dinner in Mill Valley.

Day 2: Morning bobcat safari in southern Marin, afternoon safari in west Marin.

Day 3: Morning and afternoon safari in west Marin.

Day 4: Morning bobcat safari in west Marin, afternoon safari in southern Marin. Dinner. Fly out.

Detailed Trip Summary of our 2022 Bobcat Photo Tour

Day 1: We all arrived in San Francisco, California before 1pm in the afternoon. We made our way to the hotel in southern Marin, settled in and did introductions. After, we headed out for our first bobcat safari. We at cat expeditions like this site, because, even though it is harder to find cats, when one does find them, they are generally pretty close. The same as for the Iberian lynx tour, we classify bobcats at a medium difficulty level, hoping to have one good photo opportunity with the cats. The afternoon did not produce a cat, but we did see a badger foraging during the late afternoon hours.

Day 2: After an early breakfast, we made our way back to the southern Marin location. Another quiet morning for cats, but we had some nice views of mule deer. After having lunch we drove to west Marin, where our cat luck changed. We saw four bobcats in the afternoon with our best sighting being about 30 yards away for five minutes. The bobcat was hunting gophers, which is always amazing to see. None of her attempts were however successful. During this afternoon session we also saw tule elk, seven coyotes, and a couple of male elephant seals.



Day 3: We spent all day in west Marin for our third day. In total we saw seven bobcats over the course of the day. The best sighting happened in the late afternoon. I had spotted the cat on a hillside, and asked Daniel to go up an adjoining hill with the group

while keeping my eyes on the cat and being in contact with Daniel via radios. The cat was hunting the hillside and slowly making its way toward the group. Giving Daniel instructions over the radio where to look, after about ten minutes the cat crested a final ridge and was in full view of the entire group, at only about twenty yards. The guests created some really nice photos and all were excited about such an intimate encounter. We finished the wildlife day with a pair of great horned owls hooting away. Dinner was hardy and everyone crashed quickly after such a successful day.

Day 4: For our final day, we spent the day in southern Marin. In the morning, we had by far our best bobcat sighting. We spotted a cat at sunrise, positioned ourselves to be at a good angle, and just waited to see if the cat would come towards us. After just a few seconds, the bobcat walked directly towards us. The cameras were clicking away as the cat kept coming closer and closer. When she was about ten feet away, she changed directions and disappeared into the brush. It was such a special moment for all of us. I didn't personally take photos during this encounter, so the below is a shot from a previous day. We finished the day with our customary celebratory dinner, before everyone either flew out or drove home.



Species List for the Bobcat Photo Tour 2022:

Mammals

Brush Rabbit	<i>Sylvilagus bachmani</i>
Coyote	<i>Canis latrans</i>
Gray Fox	<i>Urocyon cinereoargenteus</i>
Striped Skunk	<i>Mephitis mephitis</i>
Bobcat	<i>Lynx rufus</i>
American Badger	<i>Taxidea taxus</i>
Northern Elephant Seal	<i>Mirounga angustirostris</i>
Tule Elk	<i>Cervus elaphus hispanicus</i>
Mule Deer	<i>Lepus granatensis</i>

Birds

California Quail	<i>Callipepla californica</i>
Anna's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte anna</i>
Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
Snowy Egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>
Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>
White-tailed Kite	<i>Elanus leucurus</i>
Northern Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>
Red-shouldered Hawk	<i>Buteo lineatus</i>
Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>
Great Horned Owl	<i>Bubo virginianus</i>
Acorn Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes formicivorus</i>
Northern Flicker	<i>Colaptes auratus</i>
American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>
Black Phoebe	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>
Steller's Jay	<i>Cyanocitta stelleri</i>
Western Scrub-Jay	<i>Aphelocoma californica</i>
Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>
Western Bluebird	<i>Sialia mexicana</i>
White-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>
Song Sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>
Red-winged Blackbird	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>
Brewer's Blackbird	<i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i>

