

MONTEREY BAY 08/19-22/2023



Harbor Seals at Moss Landing

A trip to Monterey in mid August 2023 for whale watching and other mammals was short but productive.

To start things off I had booked an 8-hour seabird trip with Alvaro's Adventure which departed out of the Old Fisherman's Wharf at 730am on Saturday August 19th. Seas were reported to be calm with light winds even though Hurricane Hillary was churning to the south and about to make landfall in Mexico.

Our boat, the Pt. Sur Clipper had 20 wildlife enthusiasts along with three spotters and the crew. Leaving the harbor were the usual **sea lions** and a couple of **sea otters**.

Our first sighting outside of the harbor was a pair of **Humpback Whales** heading south-southwest just outside the Monterey peninsula. Took some fluke pics for Happy Whale and we continued heading south-southwest.

Continuing on a **Northern Fur Seal** was checking us out as we cruised by.



We continued to head the same direction getting past Point Lobos when a **Guadalupe Fur Seal** was warming its flippers even though there was minimal sun at the time. It never showed its face as I was not able to see if it had white whiskers. But the spotters confirmed the species.



Shortly after that a **Fin Whale** came into view but I was not able to get off a picture and then a little while later we got great views of a **Blue Whale** as we cruised along beside it as it surfaced 7 or 8 times before it dove.





At this point we turned around heading due north until we got horizontal to the bay where we headed due east back to the wharf. As we were approaching the bay we could see dolphins jumping at a distance, but since we were half an hour late we couldn't further investigate.

The next day we took an afternoon cruise out of Moss Landing on Blue Ocean Whale Watch with Captain Kate on her boat the High Spirits. The water was noticeably rougher with the now tropical storm was making its way on shore further south.

She took us directly to a group of four **Humpbacks** lunge-feeding. We circled around them for over an hour. We watched them, the **sea lions** and seabirds enjoying the feast. The best lunge-feeding event I have ever seen.



The final venture was a trip to Salinas River NWR which provided the **Calif Ground Squirrel** and over a dozen **Brush Rabbits**. Also a California ssp of the **Mule Deer**.

