

## Animals seen on Birdfinders' 209 tour of California

**Bobcat** (*Lynx rufus*) is a member of the cat family, Felidae. There are twelve recognized subspecies. Bobcats are grey to brown in colour with a whiskered face and black-tufted ears. Bobcats resemble the other species of the mid-sized *Lynx* genus.

We saw two of the nine species of weasels that occur in California: the **Sea Otter** (*Enhydra lutris*), and the **Long-tailed Weasel** (*Mustela frenata*). The latter is a typical weasel with a long slender body, short legs and a bushy tail that is almost as long as the rest of the animal. Gingerish-brown in colour, with yellowish-white belly fur, they moult to pure white in winter. The tip of the tail is black in all seasons.

We saw one of the five species of deer and elk that occur here, the **Mule Deer** (*Odocoileus hemionus*). This deer can be found in the western half of North America and gets its name from its large mule-like ears.

There are eight species of rabbits and hares in the area. We saw:

**Black-tailed Jackrabbit** (*Lepus californicus*) aka Desert Hare, is the commonest hare. Like other jackrabbits, the Blacktail has distinctive long ears, and the long, powerful rear legs characteristic of hares. It can grow to a length of about two feet, and weigh from three to six pounds. The Black-tailed Jackrabbit's dorsal fur is agouti (dark buff peppered with black), and its undersides and the insides of its legs are creamy white. The ears are black-tipped on the outer surface, and unpigmented inside. The ventral surface of the tail is grey to white, and the black dorsal surface of the tail continues up the spine for a few inches to form a short, black stripe.

**European Rabbit** (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*), the species of rabbit native to southwest Europe (Spain and Portugal), has been widely introduced.

**Desert Cottontail** (*Sylvilagus audubonii*) aka Audubon's Cottontail, is similar in appearance to the European Rabbit, but its ears are larger and are more often carried erect. Like all the cottontail rabbits, the Desert Cottontail has a rounded tail with white fur on the underside, which is visible as it runs away. It is light grey-brown in colour, with almost white fur on the belly. The ears are three to four inches long, and the hind feet are large.

28 species of squirrels, chipmunks, and marmots occur in California. We saw:

**Western Grey Squirrel** (*Sciurus griseus*) aka Silver-grey, the California Grey, the Oregon Grey, the Columbian Grey and the Banner-tail Squirrel. Western Gray Squirrels exhibits a form of coloration known as counter shading. The dorsal fur is silver gunmetal grey, with pure white on the underside; there may be black flecks in the tail. Ears are large but without tufts. The ears turn reddish-brown at the back in the winter. The tail is long and typically very bushy.

**Douglas Squirrel** (*Tamiasciurus douglasii*) is a pine squirrel sometimes known as the Chickaree or Pine Squirrel. It is a small, lively, bushy-tailed tree squirrel, enchanting to watch. Adults are about 33 cm in length (including its tail, which is about 13 cm long). Their appearance varies according to the season. In the summer, they are a greyish or almost greenish brown on their backs, and pale orange on the chest and belly, while legs and feet appear brown. In the winter, the coat is browner and the underside is greyer; also, the ears appear even tuftier than they do in summer. Like many squirrels, Douglas Squirrels have a white eye ring

**Yellow-bellied Marmot** (*Marmota flaviventris*) aka Rock Chuck, is a ground squirrel in the marmot genus. It lives in the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevada. It inhabits steppes, meadows, talus fields and other open habitats, sometimes on the edge of deciduous or coniferous forests, and typically above 6,500 feet (2,000m) elevation.

**Rock squirrel** (*Spermophilus variegatus*). With their long, bushy tails, look very much like tree squirrels, but seldom climb trees. They are most commonly found in rocky habitats—canyons, cliffs, and hillsides.

**California Ground Squirrel** (*Spermophilus beecheyi*); is common in California. The squirrel's upperparts are mottled, the fur containing a mixture of grey, light brown and dusky hairs; the underside is lighter, buff or greyish yellow. The fur around the eyes is whitish, while that around the ears is black. Head and body are about 12 in long and the tail an additional 6 in. The tail is relatively bushy for a ground squirrel, and at a quick glance the squirrel might be mistaken for a Fox Squirrel.

**White-tailed Antelope Squirrel** (*Ammospermophilus leucurus*) can often be seen in western and southwestern deserts, especially in shrubby areas with rocky soil. .

**Least Chipmunk** (*Tamias minimus*) The smallest member most widespread species of the chipmunk genus, *Tamias*, in North America. It is found in a variety of habitats including mixed deciduous and coniferous forests, boreal forest, and sagebrush plains. They have three dark lines with white in between along their face and five black stripes with brown edges and white in between along their back. They are grey and reddish-brown on the upperparts and greyish white on their underparts. Their tail is orange-brown.

**Lodgepole Chipmunk** (*Tamias speciosus*) aka Tahoe Chipmunk, Sequoia Chipmunk, Mt. Pinos Chipmunk, San Bernardino Chipmunk. The range of the Lodgepole Chipmunk follows the high Sierra Nevada, and continues along the tops of the San Bernardino and San Jacinto mountains near Los Angeles. Most of the time the Lodgepole Chipmunks forage on the ground, climbing on rocks and running along logs to find seeds, fungi, flowers, fruits, and insects. These striking, brightly-coloured chipmunks go into hibernation around the end of October and emerge in mid-April.

## Butterflies

California Sister (*Adelpha bredowii*)  
Lorquin's Admiral (*Limenitis lorquini*)  
Zerene Fritillary (*Speyeria zerene*)  
Monarch (*Danaus plexippus*)  
American Lady (*Vanessa virginiensis*)  
Painted Lady (*Vanessa cardui*)  
West Coast Lady (*Vanessa annabella*)  
Orange Sulphur  
Common Buckeye  
Fiery Skipper  
Cabbage White