



2018 The Count, On-Effort



The focus of the survey is gray whales (northbound) during migration through the nearshore of the Santa Barbara Channel. We also record observations of all marine-mammal species, including other whales, dolphins, pinnipeds, and sea otters. *See other reports.*

Only gray whales migrating north are counted on the board at the site as observations are made. If it is fast and furious, we sometimes lag behind a bit, but we eventually catch up. The image above is of our 2018 Count board on the fence at Counter Point. This was the last day, and the zeros were in place until the last hour when five Mother/calf pairs arrived and challenged us to enter them before the close of our survey. We managed to get them on the datasheet, but we were not able to get them on the board. No matter. The whale sightings were in the books that recorded the exciting finale! The totals were 948 gray whales, including 99 calves.

Many "regulars" who visit our site check the board. Some smile and say, "last week it was only ..." Then, they wonder why there are no calves, and we tell them that the calf migration may start at the end of March, but probably won't be robust until mid-April. That brings another big smile.

We update our website every day with an online simulation of the board, and we include a link to a PDF "Record of the Count" — which resembles this report — to the post date.

One of the most asked questions by visitors is: "How does this year's Count compare to last year's." We express that we are sorry, but we cannot answer that question. We cannot compare raw data to raw data. We are conducting a survey with strict protocols about how we observe and in what conditions. Each day, we observe a sampling of the northbound migration. At best, we are able to Count a third of a day, during daylight hours with adequate visibility and relatively calm sea conditions. The whales are traveling 24/7. We explain that at the end of the year, we will analyze our data and correct errors and omissions, and throw out sightings entered in not-acceptable conditions. We can then calculate hours we were on-effort in suitable conditions. When all is cleaned up, we meet with our collaboration team at NOAA Southwest Fisheries Science Center and use their algorithm with our data to produce estimates of the migration that passes Counter Point: Phase 1, General migration of adult and juvenile males and females; and Phase 2, the Mother/calf migration. Those estimates are then comparable to past years' efforts.

part of 2018 Gray Whales Count, Survey Report © Gray Whales Count, 2018, Santa Barbara, California, USA
prepared by Michael H Smith, Project Coordinator

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Day Number	Hours	<i>Er</i> gray whales, northbound				Running Totals				Hours
1	Feb 14	08:00	whales 11	calves 0	whales 11	calves 0	0	0	08:00	
2	Feb 15	07:58	whales 4	calves 0	whales 15	calves 0	0	0	15:58	
3	Feb 16	08:00	whales 11	calves 0	whales 26	calves 0	0	0	23:58	
4	Feb 17	08:00	whales 8	calves 0	whales 34	calves 0	0	0	31:58	
5	Feb 18	07:06	whales 7	calves 0	whales 41	calves 0	0	0	39:04	
6	Feb 19	01:23	whales	calves	whales 41	calves 0	0	0	40:27	
7	Feb 20	08:00	whales 6	calves 0	whales 47	calves 0	0	0	48:27	
8	Feb 21	02:55	whales 2	calves 0	whales 49	calves 0	0	0	51:22	
9	Feb 22	03:19	whales 1	calves 0	whales 50	calves 0	0	0	54:41	
10	Feb 23	01:33	whales	calves	whales 50	calves 0	0	0	56:14	
11	Feb 24	07:12	whales 11	calves 0	whales 61	calves 0	0	0	63:26	
12	Feb 25	08:00	whales 24	calves 0	whales 85	calves 0	0	0	71:26	
13	Feb 26	03:33	whales 5	calves 0	whales 90	calves 0	0	0	74:59	
14	Feb 27	00:00	whales	calves	whales 90	calves 0	0	0	74:59	
15	Feb 28	08:00	whales 6	calves 0	whales 96	calves 0	0	0	82:59	
16	Mar 01	06:28	whales 6	calves 0	whales 102	calves 0	0	0	89:27	
17	Mar 02	07:30	whales 12	calves 0	whales 114	calves 0	0	0	96:57	
18	Mar 03	05:03	whales 17	calves 0	whales 131	calves 0	0	0	102:00	
19	Mar 04	08:10	whales 36	calves 0	whales 167	calves 0	0	0	110:10	
20	Mar 05	08:00	whales 16	calves 0	whales 183	calves 0	0	0	118:10	
21	Mar 06	00:00	whales	calves	whales 183	calves 0	0	0	118:10	
22	Mar 07	08:00	whales 18	calves 0	whales 201	calves 0	0	0	126:10	
23	Mar 08	08:00	whales 19	calves 0	whales 220	calves 0	0	0	134:10	
24	Mar 09	07:48	whales 12	calves 0	whales 232	calves 0	0	0	141:58	
25	Mar 10	00:00	whales	calves	whales 232	calves 0	0	0	141:58	
26	Mar 11	08:00	whales 27	calves 0	whales 259	calves 0	0	0	149:58	
27	Mar 12	07:35	whales 28	calves 0	whales 287	calves 0	0	0	157:33	
28	Mar 13	00:00	whales	calves	whales 287	calves 0	0	0	157:33	
29	Mar 14	08:09	whales 48	calves 0	whales 335	calves 0	0	0	165:42	
30	Mar 15	01:04	whales 2	calves 0	whales 337	calves 0	0	0	166:46	
31	Mar 16	03:21	whales 11	calves 0	whales 348	calves 0	0	0	170:07	
32	Mar 17	03:44	whales 21	calves 0	whales 369	calves 0	0	0	173:51	
33	Mar 18	08:05	whales 55	calves 1	whales 424	calves 1	1	1	181:56	
34	Mar 19	08:00	whales 35	calves 0	whales 459	calves 1	1	1	189:56	
35	Mar 20	00:00	whales	calves	whales 459	calves 1	1	1	189:56	
36	Mar 21	00:00	whales	calves	whales 459	calves 1	1	1	189:56	
37	Mar 22	00:00	whales	calves	whales 459	calves 1	1	1	189:56	
38	Mar 23	08:00	whales 31	calves 0	whales 490	calves 1	1	1	197:56	

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Day Number	Hours	<i>Er</i> gray whales, northbound				Running Totals				Hours
39	Mar 24	04:58	whales 36	calves 0	whales 526	calves 1			202:54	
40	Mar 25	01:09	whales 6	calves 1	whales 532	calves 2			204:03	
41	Mar 26	08:05	whales 42	calves 2	whales 574	calves 4			212:08	
42	Mar 27	00:00	whales	calves	whales 574	calves 4			212:08	
43	Mar 28	08:00	whales 31	calves 0	whales 605	calves 4			220:08	
44	Mar 29	01:46	whales 4	calves 0	whales 609	calves 4			221:54	
45	Mar 30	00:00	whales	calves	whales 609	calves 4			221:54	
46	Mar 31	05:00	whales 18	calves 0	whales 627	calves 4			226:54	
47	Apr 01	07:18	whales 16	calves 1	whales 643	calves 5			234:12	
48	Apr 02	07:30	whales 33	calves 1	whales 676	calves 6			241:42	
49	Apr 03	00:00	whales	calves	whales 676	calves 6			241:42	
50	Apr 04	08:00	whales 13	calves 0	whales 689	calves 6			249:42	
51	Apr 05	08:13	whales 16	calves 0	whales 705	calves 6			257:55	
52	Apr 06	05:03	whales 9	calves 1	whales 714	calves 7			262:58	
53	Apr 07	04:57	whales 5	calves 1	whales 719	calves 8			267:55	
54	Apr 08	06:03	whales 7	calves 0	whales 726	calves 8			273:58	
55	Apr 09	08:00	whales 30	calves 9	whales 756	calves 17			281:58	
56	Apr 10	00:00	whales	calves	whales 756	calves 17			281:58	
57	Apr 11	05:54	whales 6	calves 2	whales 762	calves 19			287:52	
58	Apr 12	00:00	whales	calves	whales 762	calves 19			287:52	
59	Apr 13	08:00	whales 12	calves 5	whales 774	calves 24			295:52	
60	Apr 14	08:00	whales 7	calves 1	whales 781	calves 25			303:52	
61	Apr 15	08:00	whales 15	calves 7	whales 796	calves 32			311:52	
62	Apr 16	00:46	whales	calves	whales 796	calves 32			312:38	
63	Apr 17	00:00	whales	calves	whales 796	calves 32			312:38	
64	Apr 18	08:00	whales 9	calves 2	whales 805	calves 34			320:38	
65	Apr 19	02:17	whales 8	calves 3	whales 813	calves 37			322:55	
66	Apr 20	08:00	whales 9	calves 4	whales 822	calves 41			330:55	
67	Apr 21	08:00	whales 4	calves 0	whales 826	calves 41			338:55	
68	Apr 22	08:00	whales 14	calves 6	whales 840	calves 47			346:55	
69	Apr 23	07:37	whales 6	calves 3	whales 846	calves 50			354:32	
70	Apr 24	00:00	whales	calves	whales 846	calves 50			354:32	
71	Apr 25	08:00	whales 10	calves 5	whales 856	calves 55			362:32	
72	Apr 26	08:00	whales 7	calves 2	whales 863	calves 57			370:32	
73	Apr 27	08:00	whales 4	calves 2	whales 867	calves 59			378:32	
74	Apr 28	02:41	whales 2	calves 1	whales 869	calves 60			381:13	
75	Apr 29	04:35	whales	calves	whales 869	calves 60			385:48	
76	Apr 30	06:13	whales 2	calves 1	whales 871	calves 61			392:01	

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Day Number	Hours	<i>Er</i> gray whales, northbound			Running Totals				Hours
77	May 01	00:00	whales	calves	whales	871	calves	61	392:01
78	May 02	08:00	whales 8	calves 4	whales	879	calves	65	400:01
79	May 03	08:00	whales 5	calves 2	whales	884	calves	67	408:01
80	May 04	08:00	whales 10	calves 5	whales	894	calves	72	416:01
81	May 05	08:00	whales 6	calves 3	whales	900	calves	75	424:01
82	May 06	08:00	whales 8	calves 4	whales	908	calves	79	432:01
83	May 07	04:46	whales 10	calves 5	whales	918	calves	84	436:47
84	May 08	00:00	whales	calves	whales	918	calves	84	436:47
85	May 09	06:46	whales	calves	whales	918	calves	84	443:33
86	May 10	08:00	whales 6	calves 3	whales	924	calves	87	451:33
87	May 11	08:01	whales 6	calves 3	whales	930	calves	90	459:34
88	May 12	08:00	whales	calves	whales	930	calves	90	467:34
89	May 13	08:12	whales 4	calves 2	whales	934	calves	92	475:46
90	May 14	05:16	whales 2	calves 1	whales	936	calves	93	481:02
91	May 15	00:00	whales	calves	whales	936	calves	93	481:02
92	May 16	04:23	whales	calves	whales	936	calves	93	485:25
93	May 17	08:00	whales	calves	whales	936	calves	93	493:25
94	May 18	08:00	whales 2	calves 1	whales	938	calves	94	501:25
95	May 19	08:00	whales 10	calves 5	whales	948	calves	99	509:25

Totals	948	99	509:25
	All gray whales, including calves	calves	Hours