



Santa Barbara Photo Tour Trip Notes **February 6 to 15, 2016**

Highlights

- Something new – a photographic workshop. I only own a small point-and-shoot camera but these leaders offered to loan me some fancy equipment.
- Well known if not somewhat famous leaders: their wildlife photography are on the tail of Frontier Airlines. Recently on cover of National Geographic. Runners up in international competition. Author of book “Worshiping with a Camera: Other Nations; the Creatures Who Share This Planet With us” by Gordon and Cathy Illg.
- I'd hiked with these leaders on a Capital Reef/Grand Escalante trip so they were known.
- Photographers are from another world. They will spend hours behind a lens!

Reasons to go

- Something new. Safety valve was that the week could include long walks if needed and they were needed.
- Cousin Cheryl lives in San Luis Obispo area – we had dinner together. We will be hiking together in November for a week.
- Friend Ellen lives in Santa Monica – we had a Getty Museum day and brunch together. Ellen has been a very good friend and nearly momma to me for many years.
- Marathon friend Sharon lives in LA area – we had dinner together with other marathon friends.
- California was in 70s whereas New Jersey was snowy and in single digits and teens.
- I had a hole in my calendar between St Paul skating ending January 26 and Paris starting February 21.

So now I'm a photographer! Ha ha ha

*Thanks so much taking a chance on our photo tour, Diana, and for all the help you gave us. By the way, Cathy looked through all your photos and **she said you take good photos**. I'm afraid your talents are wasted on hiking. You should be taking more photo tours. Seriously, we enjoyed sharing this part of the country with you, and we'll keep our fingers crossed we get to photograph with you again. Attached are a couple of photos we captured of you when you weren't hiking. Safe travels, Gordon & Cathy*



Am I out of it?

So I go on a photography tour but I have no patience for it and not even a real camera. Yet I had fun. So now I'm booking a spa trip in Ojai despite not liking water, saunas, diets, massages, too much girly stuff, etc. I'm hoping for lots of hiking. Will I go on another photographic workshop trip? I'm looking at one more coming up called "Animal Babies" up north of Minneapolis.

Simple Stuff

Here are some photos from my point-and-shoot.



While the real photographers were spending hours with the butterflies, I went walking on the beach. There are two kinds of birds in the middle picture. The leaders could identify them. I can't even remember the names.



I hope you like my photo of a butterfly. The little boy did – it is on the ground between his feet and he was being very careful not to step on it. Well, we all take different kinds of photos.

Those are elephant seals on our next stop. I saw some a few years ago while on a Point Reyes Seashore hiking trip. No one is going to step on these huge things that are more like whales. They were burying themselves in the sand and their flippers were constantly in motion digging up sand to toss over themselves in order to keep cool. But some didn't make it and on my walk I found these turkey vultures who had been feasting on the babies that failed to make it. Again, we all take different kinds of photos.



I loved the glow of the sunset on the sand and the seals. The photographers preferred the early morning light, of which I slept through on two mornings.



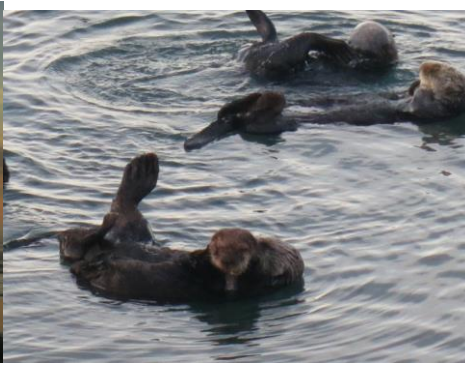
More glow. And on my hike I found cormorants spreading their wings to dry after their fishing expedition.



Still another sunset, before the visit to see these little puff balls right close to town in Morro Bay. Little Otters keep their puff ball babies on their tummies. Then we were off to see the hummingbirds and I did but photographing them was another thing. A challenge that only those without attention-deficit-syndrome could do. But here is a tiny proof that I saw them. They'd flit so fast. They'd change colors to a fluorescent glow when nervous.



This larger bird was more stable and easier to photograph. And you look at what you want to look at – I enjoy California old cars. This is a Studebaker. Later while walking on the edge of Morro Rock, I found still another fuzz ball – just a squirrel but he must have known I needed something to photograph since he posed for me.



Still another sunset was at Morro Rock and in the heavy fog and haze. Can you imagine that the photographers made three (3)!!! trips to see the Otters? I made two, missing one early morning session. Enough already! They missed the bronze park bench created in memory of a favorite local. That is ALL bronze to include the torn up looking car seat and tools on the bench.



See that camera equipment? Feel that patience? This is why they are judges and win international photo competitions while I engage in attention-deficit behavior and wander off with my baby camera. Surely they are getting big time weight lifting sessions? The first picture is their set up waiting for the hummingbird to reappear. It would be a picture they very much deserved for the set up and wait. To see these lovely professional photos, go to

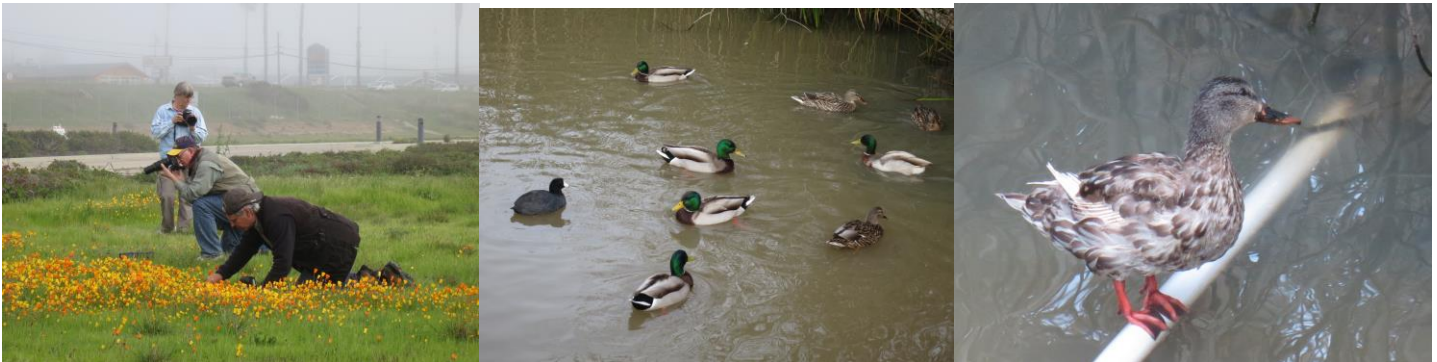
http://david-desrochers.photoshelter.com/#!/index/G0000Rnzwwkr7IMw/10000wu_HmJUpRvc



I couldn't have enjoyed the field of flowers more! Yet I wandered off and found more.



While they were getting some award-winning shots, I went to see the ducks. Maybe someday I'll get more patience, but for now, the leaders and photographers tolerated me, I'm grateful, and I had a super time.



One of the patient photographers while I went for a multi mile walk. What can you call a rainbow with no color?



All of the above were from my little Canon point-and-shoot.

Follows are a few of the pictures from the professional camera I used. By the way, the leaders practically made it an automatic point-and-shoot for me. They'd readjust it as the lighting changed and all I had to do was pretend I was lifting weights and press the button.



Monarchs and more monarchs, then Monarch clustering to stay warm.



This was breeding season and the short time mommas were nursing the babies. Can these huge elephant seals look sweet? You judge.



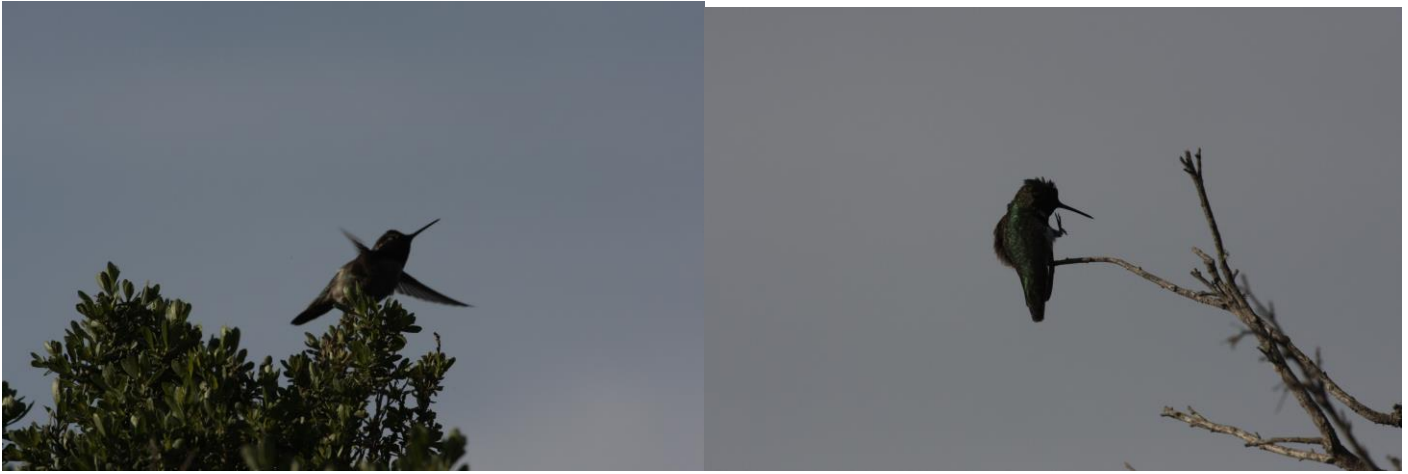
Twice I walked the couple miles to the lighthouse, one time the full distance. These elephant seals are the males. There would be lots of fights protecting their harem.



Babies would sneak in to nurse and here are three taking from one poor momma.



The otters were much more playful and cute. The babies would ride on momma's tummy. All the while this great blue heron was doing its own fishing.



The hummingbirds were like super-fast helicopters.

There are more but how many little helicopters can you want to see? It was a good week. I'd do it again.

Then I was off to Santa Monica to see marathon friends and Ellen.

I don't know why I didn't take pictures, except maybe that I was there the year before for Ellen's 80th and took a lot of pictures.

We ate at the lovely restaurant attached to the Getty Center Museum still again. I saw in a lot of traffic, going to LA, finding the dinner place with Sharon and marathon friends, going to Santa Monica, returning to Santa Monica, etc. All in all, I don't think there's a place in the world that I know of that has such onerous traffic.

Now why am I writing? I should let Gordon and Cathy do it. Here's from their newsletter:

Adventure Photography Newsletter - *Beauty & the Beasts*



***Elephant seal rookery at sunset, Canon EOS 1D Mark III,
24-105mm @ 40mm, f10, 1/13 sec, ISO 800.***

Greetings,

Wouldn't you know it. We leave for the Central California Coast the after Denver received a foot of snow, thinking we'd be enjoying the California sunshine while Colorado was in a deep freeze. Of course, the day after we left, Denver became unseasonably warm, and it's still unseasonably warm. However, even though Denver has springtime temperatures, the grass is brown and the trees are bare. As much as we love living in Colorado it was great to see green hills and flowers in the winter, to smell the salt air, to have some different species in the our viewfinders.

California was enjoying the same warm spell, so warm in fact the monarch butterflies never really needed to cluster together to stay warm. We still had lots of activity as the monarchs covered young trees, but they were warm enough to fly before the sun hit them in the morning. There were no huge clusters this time. We had to be satisfied with thousands of butterflies flying around us, lighting on a favorite series of branches only to take flight again. The Pacific monarch population began increasing in numbers even before the drought eased, and there are now nearly twice as many as there had been at the population's lowest ebb. It's too soon to call them a success story, but at least they are a delayed catastrophe...and in these times that's pretty

much a success story.



Waves crashing over a bull elephant seal, Canon EOS 1D Mark IV, 500mm, ISO 1600, f8, 1/250 sec, -1/3.

There are some unequivocal success stories in this part of the world. Northern elephant seals were thought to be extinct at the beginning of the 20th Century until a small rookery of only about 80 animals was discovered on an island off the coast of Baja. Today there are so many that existing rookeries have no room, and the seals keep colonizing new locations. The first seal came ashore at Piedras Blancas in the early 1990s, the first pup was born here a few years later, and this year more than 3,500 pups will be born in this rookery. This empty stretch of coastline, where only the odd car used to pull over every now and then, is a happening place now. We have the elephant seals to ourselves in the morning, but by afternoon, crowds have gathered, unable to resist these animals that are so homely they're attractive.

It's actually a bit surprising no other photographers seem to show up before sunrise. Granted, there is not as much light, so high ISOs are required to stop any action. But the light is even, and it's a good time to play with waves washing over the seals, using slow shutter speeds as well as fast ones when the sun rises higher. One morning we had 2 good fights right at sunrise, and we had it to ourselves. The next photographers didn't show up till half an hour later. The best fight of the tour, probably the best one we've ever seen, was in the afternoon right in front of hundreds of viewers. According to my metadata, the fight last more than 13 minutes, and I took

hundreds of images of it. It started almost too close for my lens, a 500mm, but by paying close attention to the position of the animals, and trying to time the actual blows, I only had to throw away about 75% of my fight images.

We've often had good luck with sea otters on this part of the coast, but nothing like this year. We had as many as 18 of these adorable creatures at close range, and several were with pups. There's almost too much variety on this photo tour for only 5 days of shooting, and many times photographers found themselves switching back and forth from one subject to another, often without even moving. By only swiveling the lens a bit I could be photographing either California quail or displaying hummingbirds. Sunset at the beach meant choosing between colorful landscapes or shorebirds, and if you went with the birds, you had to choose between front light, silhouettes or using a flash to light up the silhouettes. The good thing though, is there is no wrong way to go.



Sea otters loafing, Canon EOS 7D Mark II, 100-400mm @ 100mm, ISO 800, f10, 1/4000 sec, -1/3.

, [click here](#), or go to our website, www.advenphoto.com, and click on Tour Highlights.

Itinerary

Sat Feb 6

9:25am Depart Newark EWR via UA#1817
11:55am Arrive Los Angeles LAX for plane change and a 3:18 connect time

4:11pm Depart Los Angeles LAX via UA#5355
5:00pm Arrive Santa Barbara SBA

Hotel shuttle

Hotel Best Western Plus, South Coast Inn – 1 night
5620 Calle Real, Goleta, CA 93117 Tele 805 967 3200
http://book.bestwestern.com/bestwestern/US/CA/Goleta-hotels/BEST-WESTERN-PLUS-South-Coast-Inn/Hotel-Overview.do?propertyCode=05521&cm_mmc=BL-_-Google-_-GMB-_-05521

Sun Feb 7

11:45am Pick up Diana, Chuck, Al and Mike at the Best Western South Coast Inn

12:00 noon Pick up Mary, David and Cathy at the Santa Barbara Airport

We'll have 2 vehicles, and once we have everyone picked up we'll head to Pismo Beach, which is about 90 minutes away. Weather permitting, we will be photographing that afternoon.

Noon Start of Adventure Photography "Beauty & The Beasts Photo Tour"
www.advenphoto.com with Gordon and Cathy Cell: 720-838-4236.
gordon@advenphoto.com or cathy.gordon.illg@gmail.com
Office tele: 303-237-7086

Hotel Best Western Shore Cliff Lodge in Pismo Beach – 1 night
2555 Price Street, Pismo Beach, California, 93449-2111 Tele: 805/773-4671
http://book.bestwestern.com/bestwestern/US/CA/Pismo-Beach-hotels/BEST-WESTERN-PLUS-Shore-Cliff-Lodge/Hotel-Overview.do?propertyCode=05203&cm_mmc=BL-_-Google-_-GMB-_-05203

Location, location, location is a real estate mogul's mantra that perfectly applies to this Pismo Beach hotel where the Pacific Ocean is (literally) at your feet. This Pismo Beach hotel is perched on a 90 foot cliff above the ocean and every room has a view with a private patio or balcony. Other Hearst Castle hotels wish they had our real estate. Whether you prefer to explore Edna Valley wine region, Hearst Castle, or simply frolic in the turquoise waters, everything you imagine a California vacation to be comes alive here. Within easy walk of town

Mon Feb 8

Hotel Best Western Cavalier in San Simeon – 1st of 2 nights
9415 Hearst Drive, San Simeon, California, 93452-9724 Tele: 805 -927-4688
http://book.bestwestern.com/bestwestern/US/CA/San-Simeon-hotels/BEST-WESTERN-PLUS-Cavalier-Oceanfront-Resort/Hotel-Overview.do?propertyCode=05173&cm_mmc=BL-_-Google-_-GMB-_-05173

The BEST WESTERN PLUS Cavalier Oceanfront Resort, Cambria and San Simeon's only oceanfront accommodation, is located just three miles south of Hearst Castle. A destination for discovery and unbelievable natural beauty, where classic luxury and gracious hospitality ensure you a memorable stay. The BEST WESTERN PLUS Cavalier Oceanfront Resort is located on California's scenic

Highway 1, the world's most beautiful roadway and is your gateway to the natural migrating Gray Whales, California Sea Otters and some of California's finest vineyards and wineries

Note: Not much of a town here or anything else to do.

Tue Feb 9

Hotel Best Western Cavalier in San Simeon – 2nd of 2 nights

Wed Feb 10

Hotel Best Western San Marcos in Morro Bay - 1st of 2 nights
250 Pacific Street, Morro Bay, California, 93442-2261 Tele: 805-772-2248

http://book.bestwestern.com/bestwestern/US/CA/Morro-Bay-hotels/BEST-WESTERN-PLUS-San-Marcos-Inn/Hotel-Overview.do?propertyCode=05232&cm_mmc=BL- -Google- -GMB- -05232

Conveniently located half way between Los Angeles and San Francisco, the BEST WESTERN PLUS San Marcos Inn offers travelers a perfect gateway to many of California's great attractions. The hotel is also accessible to many sites of interest in the Morro Bay area, including the Morro Bay State Park, Montaña de Oro State Park, and Hearst Castle. Hotel guests enjoy easy access to multiple recreational opportunities including golfing, beaches, kayaking, fishing, birdwatching, shopping, whale watching and wine tasting. This deluxe California hotel offers rooms with bay, ocean and Morro Rock views. All rooms come equipped with cable satellite television with HBO®, free access to high-speed Internet, microwave and refrigerator. The hotel's Hydra Therapy indoor spa is also an ideal place for guests to relax and unwind. Other hotel amenities include a complimentary deluxe continental breakfast, and complimentary wine and cheese every evening.

Dinner Cheryl to drive from San Luis Obispo and join me (and group?)

Thu Feb 11

Hotel Best Western San Marcos in Morro Bay – 2nd of 2 nights

The Morro Bay Hotel is within easy walk of the town—Morro Bay is close to the Embarcadero.

Fri Feb 12

2:00pm End of Photo Tour

3:00pm Rental car at Santa Barbara SBA

Hotel Hyatt Place Los Angeles/LAX/El Segundo – 3 nights
750 North Nash Street, El Segundo, CA 90245 Tele 310 322 2880

<http://elsegundo.place.hyatt.com/en/hotel/home.html>

Free airport shuttle service and WiFi. The Hyatt Place LAX hotel in El Segundo is located off the 105 Freeway less than 3 miles south from LAX International, away from the noise and congestion of W Century Boulevard. Our guests enjoy spacious rooms, a location near the airport but away from the noise, and complimentary: pre-scheduled LAX shuttle service, hotel-wide WiFi, parking, and a daily hot breakfast buffet.

Dinner With Sharon and May – location TBD

Sat Feb 13

Sun Feb 14

9:00am? Pick up Ellen in Santa Monica – to be at Getty Center at 10am opening

1659 Ocean Front Walk #102, Santa Monica CA 90401 Tele: (310) 458-0788

10:30am Woven Gold Tapestries docent tours

Woven Gold: Tapestries of Louis XIV – to May 1, 2016 - The Sun King, Louis XIV of France, who reigned from 1643 to 1715, formed the greatest collection of tapestries in early modern Europe. Extraordinary resources of time, money, and talent were allocated to the creation of these works, which were meticulously woven by hand with wool, silk, and precious metal-wrapped thread, after designs by the most esteemed artists.

As patron, heir, and collector, Louis XIV vastly augmented the prestigious French royal collection of tapestries. Displayed within his palaces while in residence and in outdoor courtyards on feast days, these monumental hangings embodied and proclaimed his magnificence.

The legacy of tapestry weaving as a national endeavor continues in France today, with state commissions from contemporary artists such as Raymond Hains who designed Diptyque/I. With rare loans from the Mobilier National, this major international loan exhibition presents a selection of grand tapestries that evoke the brilliance of the Sun King's court.

This exhibition was organized by the J. Paul Getty Museum in association with the Mobilier National et les Manufactures Nationales des Gobelins, de Beauvais et de la Savonnerie.

12:00noon Renaissance docent tour

1:30pm Restaurant reservations – special price fix menu for Valentine's Day – closes at 3pm

All day Edible – Art of Food Mobile Tour in Research Center 8-5pm

Mon Feb 15

10:00am Turn in Rental car

1:00pm Depart Los Angeles LAX via UA#2007

9:10pm Arrive Newark EWR

Note re other things to do during photo tour:

There is a good place to walk near the elephant seals by San Simeon, good places to walk around Morro Bay and the place where we photograph the monarch butterflies in Pismo Beach connects to a large park and the beach where you can walk a long ways

Participants for Beauty & the Beasts Photo Tour

| | | |
|------------------|----------------|--|
| Mary Caffrey | Benbrook, TX | cdrad@sbcglobal.net |
| Diana Burton | Middletown, NJ | dianab@juno.com |
| David DesRochers | Cranford, NJ | desrochers199@outlook.com |
| Cathy DesRochers | Cranford, NJ | |
| Chuck Lampman | Kennesaw, GA | chuck@lampman.com |
| Al Sheppard | Lakeland, FL | apsent@tampabay.rr.com |
| Mike Smith | Waverly, WV | tiki33@cascable.net |

All nature photographers are familiar with the population of monarch butterflies that winters in Mexico, but there is another population that is much easier to photograph. Every winter, monarchs west of the Rockies head for the Central California coast. Their numbers can't compete with those in Mexico—tens of thousands compared to millions in Mexico—but the photography is just as good if not better. In most photos, thousands of butterflies look every bit as nice as millions do.

Because of restrictions on using flash on the butterflies in Mexico, photographers can actually come away with better photos of the California monarchs. Using a flash is often the difference between a decent photo of clustering monarchs and a great one.

After the beauties we'll be spending two days with the beasts. Every winter for the past 15 years, thousands of elephant seals have come ashore on this picturesque stretch of California coast to have their pups and begin the next generation. This is a great opportunity for behavior images because we'll be plenty close as the mothers care for their pups and the bulls battle for dominance.

The last two days will find us enjoying the seaside village of Morro Bay, and Morro Bay is a great place to visit even without a camera. A healthy sea otter population, wintering shorebirds and very tolerant displaying hummingbirds make it a paradise for nature photographers.

There will be opportunities for scenic photography along the California coast, but this tour revolves around wildlife, and the instruction will reflect that. Tips on capturing behavior, incorporating wildlife into scenic images and creating strong portraits will be included in the instruction.

As with all of our tours, the price includes all transportation (except airfare to and from Santa Barbara, California), lodging, breakfast, dinner, snacks, all entry fees, instruction & critiques.

Tour Cost: \$2395 Deposit: \$500 Single Supp: \$300

Airport: Santa Barbara, California

Arrival: Schedule your arrival by noon on February 7th.

Departure: Plan your departure for 2 p.m. or later on February 12th.

From Ellen: These bring back good memories. Mr. Elmand, the old gentleman who lived in the lot behind ours when we lived in Whittier and the children were little, was a retired ethnologist - a bug specialist, and he grew the food plants for a number of butterflies in his back yard. He would give me cuttings of the food plant and the caterpillars so the children could watch their life cycle. Butterflies grow too big for their skin, it splits, and the caterpillar secretes a new larger skin, grows to fill that, and repeats the process 4 times during its life. Then it's ready to become a butterfly. The caterpillar will find a place where it can hang, then spin a little pad of silk that attach it to its support. Bends into a J shape, and along the shugest spot of the J, it secretes a flued that will cover it and hardening into it's a chryscust. It will hang motionless or about 2 weeks while the new wings form inside the Chryscent. Then one day, it begins to wiggle and breaks out of its chryclist. It stretches its wings and pumps a fluid through the veins in its wings. That fluid hardens and give its new wings stability. And now it's ready for its first flight.

Many times I've watch this process, and when the new butterfly has pumped the fluid through its winds, I place my finger in front of it and most often, it will crawl up on my finger and allow me to carry it outside where I can watch it take off on its first flight and see it take to the breeze and begin its new life as a butterfly. It's a fascinate process to watch. One of life's minor miracles to see a caterpillar change into a butterfly. And when my granddaughter was about 5 years old, I took her to a park north of Santa Cruz, CA. to see a place where the monarch butterfly spend the winter covering the trees with their orange wings. A very beautiful sight. It was a happy moment. If you type in butterflies and caterpillars into the address line on your compute, you will probably find some youtube videos that will let you watch the life cycle of a butterfly, if you're interesting in seeing it.

From Cathy and Gordon: Thought you might enjoy knowing that the monarch butterfly numbers are way up this year—can't wait for February!

<http://www.berkeleyside.com/2015/11/23/first-time-observed-hundreds-of-monarch-butterflies-cluster-in-berkeleys-aquatic-park/>