



NEWSLETTER

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A group of Gray Whales Count volunteers count gray whales at Coal Oil Point in Santa Barbara. (ianvorsterphotography.com) It was a crisp morning following a cold night in Goleta’s Coronado Monarch Butterfly Preserve. As Luke crossed a beam that had been dropped across a swampy area, he looked up at the Eucalyptus grove and sighed quietly. “Where are the butterflies Dad,” he asked me—with one part expectation and one part disappointment. “They’re meant to be roosting up there in the leafy branches,” I motioned before adding, “hopefully.” But we didn’t immediately see any monarchs in the trees—instead we noticed a few on the ground, here and there. Our eyes became accustomed to the early morning gloom, and we realized an inordinate number of brightly colored insects were scattered on the ground throughout the grove. As we walked and photographed them, stepping carefully, I realized why so many were to be found there—with a windy night, many had blown off their perch; and with it also being a cold night, they had not been able to stretch their wings and fly. They were waiting for the caress of the first rays to crase the

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