

## FIRST RECORD OF THE GREAT KISKADEE IN BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO

CHARLES T. COLLINS, Department of Biology, California State University, Long Beach, California 90840

DALE DELANEY, Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc., P.O. Box 33008, Austin, Texas 78764

JONATHAN L. ATWOOD, Manomet Bird Observatory, Manomet, Massachusetts 02345

The Great Kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) has a widespread distribution extending from southern Texas south through most of Middle and South America to central Argentina (Meyer de Schauensee 1966). In western Mexico it is resident in southern Sonora with occasional individuals ranging north to southern Arizona (A.O.U. 1983). It has not been previously recorded from Baja California, Mexico (Wilbur 1987), even though its distinctive plumage and strident vocalizations make it an obvious and easily identified species throughout its range.

On 5 January 1987 we observed a single Great Kiskadee about 3 km south of San Jose del Cabo, Baja California Sur, in a date palm orchard intermixed with dry thorn scrub on the north shore of a permanent estero. Even though the bird was seen and heard only briefly before it disappeared, its distinctive plumage (yellow belly, brown back, rufous wings and tail, black crown and facial area with white throat, forehead and eyeline) and vocalizations, very familiar to all three observers, made us certain of the identification. The Great Kiskadee might be confused with the similar Social Flycatcher (*Myiozetetes similis*) and Boat-billed Flycatcher (*Megarhynchus pitangua*), which also occur in western mainland Mexico. However, the former species is substantially smaller than the bird observed, and Boat-billed Flycatchers lack the rufous wings and tail evident in this individual. Also, both of these species have distinctive vocalizations different from the Great Kiskadee's. Subsequent attempts over the next hour to relocate the bird were unsuccessful.

The avifauna of the Baja California peninsula has been summarized by Grinnell (1928) and more recently by Wilbur (1987). Even so, the difficulty of travel in some areas of this part of Mexico, particularly prior to the completion of the transpeninsular highway in 1973, has prevented the type of detailed field surveys necessary for a full description of the peninsula's avifauna. Many of the vagrants found regularly in southern California (Garrett and Dunn 1981) are yet unrecorded from the peninsula. While the occurrence of west Mexican species in Baja California is less probable, records of such species as the Fan-tailed Warbler (*Euthlypis lachrymosa*) (Grinnell and Lamb 1927) and Great Kiskadee certainly add to the allure of future field work in this area. The increased accessibility to this area (and increasing interest by ornithologists from both the U.S. and Mexico) is sure to result in new distributional records for Baja California.

We thank Dr. Juan Guzman P. of the Universidad Autonoma de Baja California Sur for his hospitality and logistical support and Eduardo Palacios C. for his company in the field.

### LITERATURE CITED

- Garrett, K., and Dunn, J. 1981. Birds of Southern California. Los Angeles Audubon Society, Los Angeles.
- Grinnell, J.A. 1928. A distributional summation of the ornithology of Lower California. Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool. 32:1-300.

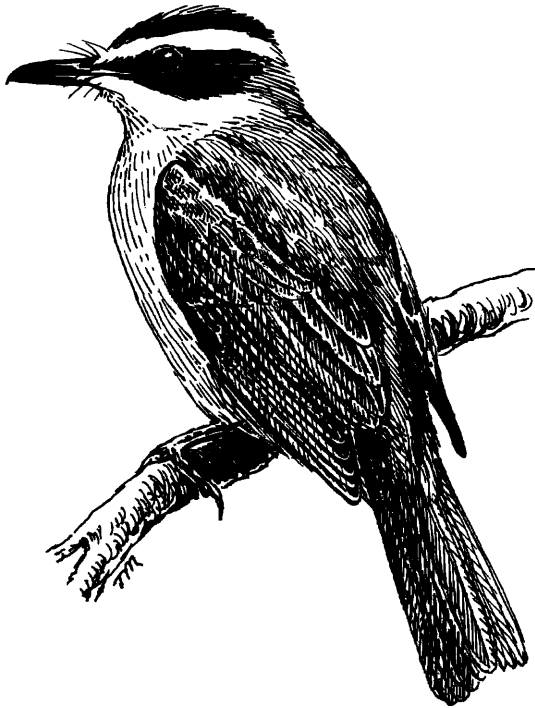
NOTES

Grinnell, J.A., and Lamb, C.C. 1927. New bird records from Lower California  
*Condor* 29:124-126.

Meyer de Schauensee, R. 1966. *The Species of Birds of South America and  
Their Distribution*. Acad. Nat. Sci., Philadelphia.

Wilbur, S.R. 1987. *Birds of Baja California*. Univ. Calif. Press, Berkeley.

*Accepted 19 July 1990*



Great Kiskadee

*Sketch by Tim Manolis*