

FIRST RECORD OF THE WESTERN KINGBIRD (*TYRANNUS VERTICALIS*) IN BAJA CALIFORNIA SUR

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The Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*) is the most widespread kingbird in the western USA, being common in dry and open country (Peterson 1990). Its breeding distribution ranges from southern Canada to northern Mexico, and it winters south to Costa Rica (Peterson and Chalif 1973). In Baja California, the Western Kingbird is considered a spring transient and summer resident species in the north (Wilbur 1987), being recorded south just to El Salto and Rancho Rosarito (30° 25' N, 115° 25' W) (Short and Banks 1965). However, on 29 September 1990 we recorded two individuals of the species in the southern tip of the peninsula. The birds were perched on fences and mesquites, catching insects at Ejido La Trinidad (37.5 km south of La Paz; 23° 48' N, 110° 19' W), where disturbed areas surrounded by open woodland and field crops dominated the landscape. Vegetation of the area was composed of mesquite (*Prosopis articulata*), Choya (*Opuntia cholla*), palo verde (*Cercidium praecox*), Tacote (*Viguiera deltoidea*), and isolated Dagger Cactus (*Machaerocereus gummosus*), Organ Pipe Cactus (*Lemaireocereus thurberi*), and Cardon (*Pachycereus pringlei*).

We recognized these Western Kingbirds by their bright lemon yellow bellies, pale grayish throats and breasts, and gray heads, and particularly by the narrow white edging on each side of their black tails. The white edges on the outer feathers of the tail helped us to differentiate this species from Cassin's Kingbird (*Tyrannus vociferans*), a regular winter visitor to Baja California Sur.

Our records suggest that Western Kingbirds in the southern tip of Baja California must have been overlooked before. The avifauna of Baja California, especially of the southern part of the peninsula, has not been very well determined, and we want to call attention to the need for more intensive studies year round, mainly in the winter season, because Baja California Sur seems to receive a considerable number of overwintering bird species (Rodriguez 1988).

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