## **NOTE**

## FIRST MAINLAND RECORD OF THE RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH FROM BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO

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On 15 September 1990 we collected a Red-breasted Nuthatch (Sitta canadensis) at Rancho Casa Verde, western slope of the Sierra Juárez, east of Ensenada, Baja California, México (32 $^{\circ}$  04 $^{\circ}$  N, 116 $^{\circ}$  05 $^{\circ}$  W; altitude 1370 m). The specimen, an adult male of 113 mm total length (Figure 1), was taken climbing in *Pinus jeffreyi*, and represents the first mainland record of this species from Baja California.

The fall of 1990 saw a large incursion of the Red-breasted Nuthatch in California, just north of the U.S.A.–Mexico international boundary (Rich Stallcup pers. comm.), and is probable that our collected bird in mainland Baja California was in transit rather than a breeder or resident.

The Red-breasted Nuthatch was known previously in northwestern Mexico only from Guadalupe Island, off the coast of Baja California (Grinnell 1928, Miller et al. 1957, Howell and Cade 1954, Jehl and Everett 1985, Wilbur 1987). In 1970 and 1971 Jehl found a small breeding population of the species in the pine woods at the



Figure 1. Adult male Red-breasted Nuthatch (Sitta canadensis) collected at Rancho Casa Verde, Sierra Juárez, Baja California, México, 15 September 1990.

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north end of the island (Jehl and Everett 1985). However, Quintana-Barrios, during investigations of Guadalupe Island in October 1984 and 1985 and in March, August, and December 1986 did not find *Sitta canadensis* in that area.

Unitt (1984) recorded this species in San Diego County, California, U.S.A., as an uncommon and very localized resident in coniferous trees, whether planted in parks and residential areas or native in mountain woodland, but there are no Red-breasted Nuthatch records for the Baja California peninsula (Grinnell 1928, Wilbur 1987).

Given that the Red-breasted Nuthatch is a regular breeding species and irregular autumn migrant in California, sometimes in large numbers, just north of the international boundary, it is astounding that there have been no published records of this species for mainland Baja California. Once again, it is clear that ornithological investigations in the northern part of the peninsula are necessary. It is even possible that bird surveys have been so few that they have fallen between incursions of this species.

Our specimen was deposited in the Bird Collection, Laboratorio de Vertebrados, Facultad de Ciencias, Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (UABC-0297).

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