LITERATURE CITED

Atwood, J. L. 1991. Speciation and geographic variation in black-tailed gnatcatchers. Ornithol. Monogr. 42.

Braden, G. T., McKernan, R. L., and Powell, S. M. 1997. Effects of nest parasitism by the Brown-headed Cowbird on nesting success of the California Gnatcatcher. Condor 99:858–865.

Campbell, K. F., Erickson, R. A., Haas, W. E., and Patten, M. A. 1998. California Gnatcatcher use of habitats other than coastal sage scrub: Conservation and management implications. W. Birds 29:421–433.

Ervin, S. 1977. Bushtit helpers: Accident or altruism? Bird Behavior 1:93–97.

Shy, M. M. 1982. Interspecific feeding among birds: A review. J. Field Ornithol. 53:370–393.

Skutch, A. F. 1960. Life histories of Central American birds. Pac. Coast Avifauna 34.

Skutch, A. F. 1961. Helpers among birds. Condor 63:198–226.

Skutch, A. F. 1987. Helpers at Birds' Nests. Univ. of Iowa Press, Iowa City.

Welty, J. C., and Baptista, L. 1988. The Life of Birds, 4th ed. Saunders, New York.

Accepted 15 August 1998

A NEW SITE OF SYMPATRY OF THE CALIFORNIA AND BLACK-TAILED GNATCATCHERS IN THE UNITED STATES

KENNETH L. WEAVER, 1113 Senwood Way, Fallbrook, California 92028

Within its current range in the United States, the California Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica*) frequents low scrub on the coastal side of the Peninsular and Transverse ranges in southwestern California. The closely related Black-tailed Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila melanura*) generally inhabits the Colorado and Mojave deserts within its range in southern California. Atwood (1988) discovered that both species coexist in limited areas of northeastern Baja California. This note reports a new site of sympatry of the two species on the U.S. side of the border.

I observed both gnatcatchers near the small community of Aguanga in southwestern Riverside County, California. Aguanga is located east of the city of Temecula within the coastal drainage of the Santa Margarita River. I found all gnatcatchers within 2 km of State Highway 371, between its intersection with Wilson Valley Road to the north and State Highway 79 to the south (Figure 1, Appendix). I believe my observations constitute the most inland records of a current established population of the California Gnatcatcher in southern California and the westernmost records of the Black-tailed Gnatcatcher.

I first noted the Black-tailed Gnatcatcher on 19 November 1995 with a pair in a draw 4.5 km north of the intersection of highways 79 and 371. I subsequently recorded this species in several draws immediately northwest of this intersection. The nearest previously known populations occur 45 km to the northeast in Deep Canyon

south of Palm Springs, Riverside County (Weathers 1983) and approximately the same distance to the southeast near Ranchita, San Diego County (C. Edwards pers. comm.). I am unaware of additional records within a coastal drainage in California.

I first noted the California Gnatcatcher on 9 December 1995. I spotted two males in a draw just west of the initial observation of the Black-tailed Gnatcatcher. I have subsequently found the coastal species at nine additional locations. The nearest populations inhabit Lancaster Valley north of Radec (M. A. Patten pers. comm.), 2 to 3 km west of my closest observations. This species also occurs northeast of Vail Lake, 11 km west of Aguanga (Metropolitan Water District 1991) and above the Lake Skinner dam, 23 km northwest of Aguanga (Atwood 1990). Atwood (1990) considered the upper elevational limit for this species in the inland portion of its range to be 500 m. However, the Aguanga population occupies elevations ranging from 610 to 805 m.

A variety of shrublands dominate washes and all upland areas surrounding Aguanga. All my gnatcatcher observations were at sites dominated, at least in part, by coastal sage scrub. Flat-topped buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) provides the greatest cover. Other prominent species include the sugarbush (*Rhus ovata*), jojoba (*Simmondsia chinensis*), valley cholla (*Opuntia parryi*), Mohave yucca (*Yucca schidigera*), and deerweed (*Lotus scoparius*).

Gnatcatchers occur to a lesser extent in several additional shrub habitats. One pair of Black-tailed Gnatcatchers included a mixed stand of redshank (*Adenostoma sparsiflorum*) and chamise (*A. fasciculatum*) within its territory. These shrubs are chaparral indicators. Two pairs of California Gnatcatchers included portions of dry washes within their territories. These spots are dominated by scale-broom (*Lepidospartum squamatum*) and wingscale (*Atriplex canescens*).

Many disjunct populations of plants associated with the Colorado Desert are also characteristic of Aguanga. They include thickets of honey mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*), and Anderson's desert thorn (*Lycium andersonii*). The territories of two Black-tailed Gnatcatchers and five California Gnatcatchers overlapped with this type of vegetation. True desert vegetation occurs no closer than the Palm Springs area and near Ranchita, as described above. Aguanga is separated from these areas by dense stands of chaparral and by montane coniferous forests from which both species are absent.

Both gnatcatchers appear to be locally distributed near Aguanga. Although vegetation appears appropriate, I have not recorded either gnatcatcher in shrublands immediately west of Aguanga nor to the east in Dameron Valley or near Oak Grove. In areas of sympatry in Baja California, Atwood (1988) observed the California Gnatcatcher in coastal sage scrub, while the Black-tailed Gnatcatcher inhabited nearby desert scrub vegetation. Distinct habitat preferences are less noticeable at Aguanga, as shown by the varied scrub habitats occupied by each species and by the presence of both gnatcatchers in two draws.

I confirmed breeding for each species in 1996. On 11 May, I observed a pair of Black-tailed Gnatcatchers feeding insects to a single fledgling (location 9, Figure 1). I noted a male California Gnatcatcher building a nest on 20 April, a pair feeding young on 11 May, and a pair with one fledged young on 18 May (locations 5, 11, and 7, Figure 1).

My only simultaneous observation was on 15 March 1996 when I "squeaked up" a male Black-tailed Gnatcatcher and a female California Gnatcatcher. Both birds perched in the same sugarbush 5 m from me. The two foraged fairly closely for a few minutes, then proceeded in separate directions. I have not observed any individuals showing obvious hybrid characteristics.

I thank Michael A. Patten for providing records of the California Gnatcatcher and for reviewing the manuscript.

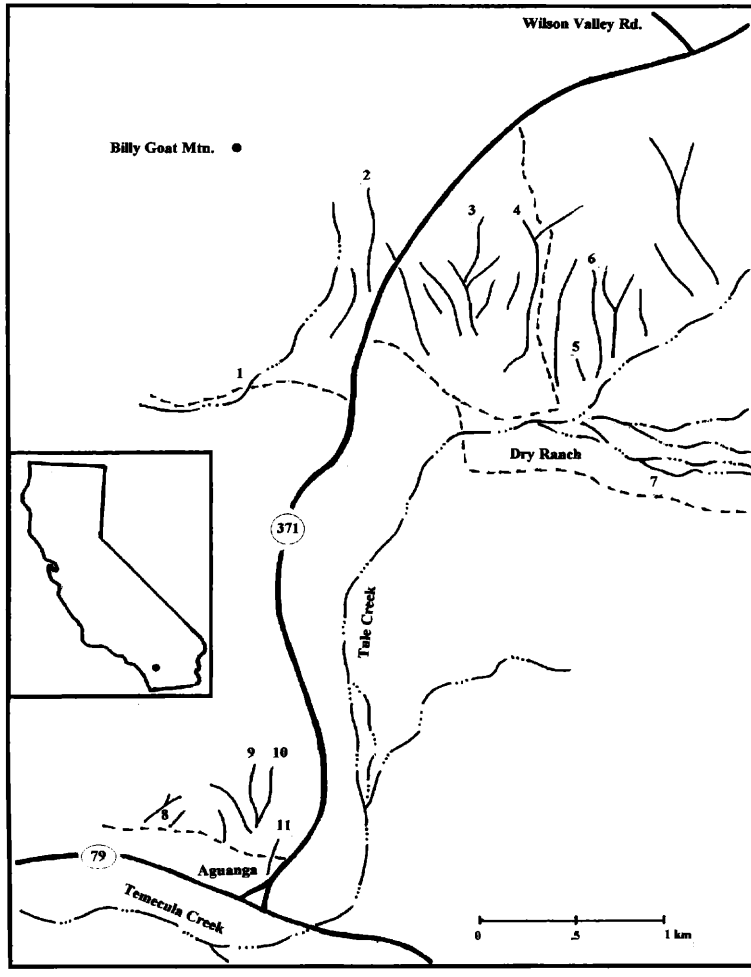

Figure 1. Sightings of Black-tailed and California Gnatcatchers near Aguanga, California. Numbers are keyed to the appendix.

LITERATURE CITED

Atwood, J. L. 1988. Speciation and geographic variation in black-tailed gnatcatchers. Ornithol. Monogr. 42.

Atwood, J. L. 1990. Status review of the California Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica*). Manomet Center Cons. Sci., P. O. Box 1170, Manomet, MA 02345.

Metropolitan Water District. 1991. Eastside Reservoir Project, Final Environmental Impact Report. Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Planning Division, 1111 Sunset Blvd., P. O. Box 54153, Los Angeles, CA 90054-0153.

Weathers, W. W. 1983. Birds of Southern California's Deep Canyon. Univ. Calif. Press, Berkeley.

APPENDIX. Gnatcatcher observations near Aguanga, California. Numbers are keyed to Figure 1. Abbreviations used: CSS, coastal sage scrub; CHP, chaparral; WSH, dry wash; MDT, mesquite-desert thorn thicket.

Location 1: nw 1/4, ne 1/4, sect. 22, T8S, R1E. Vegetation: CSS; SW-facing draw; California Gnatcatcher, male, 15 Jun 1996.

Location 2: nw 1/4, sw 1/4, sect. 14, T8S, R1E. Vegetation: CSS; S-facing draw; California Gnatcatcher, pair, 15 Jun 1996.

Location 3: nw 1/14, se 1/4, sect. 14, T8S, R1E. Vegetation: CSS; S-facing draw, California Gnatcatcher, two males, 9 Dec 1995.

Location 4: ne 1/4, se 1/4, sect. 14, T8S, R1E. Vegetation: CSS; S-facing draw, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, pair, 19 Nov 1995, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, male, 15 Mar 1996; California Gnatcatcher, female, 15 Mar 1996; California Gnatcatcher, male, 20 Apr 1996; California Gnatcatcher, pair,1 Jun 1996.

Location 5: sw 1/4, sw 1/4, sect. 13, T8S, R1E. Vegetation: CSS, MDT; S-facing draw; California Gnatcatcher, male, 1 Jun 1996.

Location 6: sw 1/4, sw 1/4, sect. 13, T8S, R1E. Vegetation: CSS, WSH, MDT; S-facing draw/dry wash; California Gnatcatcher, male, 20 Apr 1996: California Gnatcatcher, female, 1 Jun 1996.

Location 7: se 1/4, nw 1/4, sect. 24, T8S, R1E. Vegetation: WSH; dry wash; California Gnatcatcher, pair, 9 Dec 1995; California Gnatcatcher, pair with one young, 18 May 1996.

Location 8: ne 1/4, sw 1/4, sect. 27, T8S, R1E. Vegetation: CSS, CHP, MDT; three adjacent S-facing draws; Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, male, 16 Apr 1996; Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, pair with one young, 11 May 1996.

Location 9: nw 1/4, se 1/4, sect. 27, T8S, R1E. Vegetation, CSS, MDT; S-facing draw; Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, male, 18 May 1996; California Gnatcatcher, female, 14 Jan 1996; California Gnatcatcher, male, 4 May 1996; California Gnatcatcher, pair, 18 May 1996; California Gnatcatcher, individual heard, 15 Jun 1996.

Location 10: nw 1/4, se 1/4, sect. 27, T8S, R1E. Vegetation: CSS, MDT; S-facing draw; California Gnatcatcher, male, 16 Apr 1996.

Location 11: se 1/4, se 1/4, sect. 27, T8S, R1E. Vegetation: CSS, MDT; S-facing draw; California Gnatcatcher, male, 4 May 1996; California Gnatcatcher, pair, 18 May 1996.

Accepted 15 September 1998