The first record of *Corvus cryptoleucos* from Baja California Sur, Mexico

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**Abstract**

This note reports the first record of *Corvus cryptoleucos* from Baja California Peninsula. Previously the species was known only from mainland Mexico and southwestern USA.

**Keywords:** Chihuahuan Raven, *Corvus cryptoleucos*, Baja California.

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**Description**

Obvious *Corvus*, the size of a Brown-necked Raven *C. ruficollis*, with glossy black plumage and black bare parts. Bases of neck feathers white, looking like irregularly-shaped white spots on windward side. Tail looks wedge-shaped when the bird is perched, and strongly rounded in flight. Throat feathers slightly elongated. Bill noticeably less massive than in Common Raven, and appears somewhat long for a corvid.

**Discussion**

The white bases of the neck feathers, together with size differences, bill and tail shape, allowed positive identification of the birds as *C. cryptoleucos* and neither *C. corax* (which is larger, with gray bases of neck feathers, very massive bill and strongly wedged tail) nor *C. brachyrhynchos* (which is smaller, with relatively short bill and almost square tail). The only other *Corvus* species occurring close to the Peninsula, Sinaloa Crow *C. sinaloae*, is even smaller than *C. brachyrhynchos* and has different general appearance.

The Chihuahuan Raven is known from arid regions of southwestern USA, and from Mexico south to Guanajuato and Mexico states, with the northernmost populations being migratory. It occurs in winter along the mainland coast of the Sea of Cortez, approximately 260 km from the southernmost part of the Peninsula (National Geographic Society 1999, Peterson and Chalif 1987). However, it has never been reported from Baja California (Erickson and Howell 2001, Lepage 2004, Wilbur 1987).

Although ship-assisted passage cannot be ruled out, the ability of *Corvus* species to disperse over seas and oceans is well known from their presence on oceanic islands such as Hawaii (Goodwin 1976) and from pelagic observations (Yakhontov 1977).
Literatura citada


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