

A HIGH ELEVATION OCCURRENCE OF SCRUB JAYS IN THE SAN BERNARDINO MOUNTAINS

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The widely distributed Scrub Jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*) is primarily limited altitudinally in southern California to elevations below approximately 2300 m (Pitelka 1951). However, on 26 July 1980 I observed two individuals of this species 0.5 km ESE of the peak of Mount San Gorgonio, San Bernardino County, California, at an elevation of approximately 3620 m. Vegetation in this area consisted of sparse, wind-stunted Limber Pine (*Pinus flexilis*); the only other birds in evidence were Clark's Nutcrackers (*Nucifraga columbiana*).

Although central and southern Mexican populations have been reported at elevations of up to 3700 m (Stone 1890, Davis 1945), there appear to be no comparable altitudinal records from the United States (Pitelka 1951). The highest previously reported observations from the San Bernardino Mountains involved birds seen during August and September at 2300-2500 m (Grinnell 1908, van Rossem and Pierce 1915). Breeding pairs of Scrub Jays maintain permanent, year-round territories (Atwood 1980, Ritter 1983), and the birds observed on Mount San Gorgonio probably were either non-breeding individuals or young of the year which had wandered upslope from more typical habitats at lower elevations.

This note was improved by the comments of Ned K. Johnson and G. Shumway Suffel.

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Accepted 4 October 1983