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NOTEWORTHY RECORD OF THE KIT FOX (MAMMALIA: CANIDAE:
VULPES VELOX MACROTIS) IN VIZCAINO DESERT,
BAJA CALIFORNIA SUR, MÉXICO

Sergio Ticul Alvarez-Castañeda¹

Key words: kit fox, *Vulpes velox*, Baja California Sur.

Kit foxes, identified as *Vulpes velox devia* and *V. v. tenuirostris*, have been recorded for the peninsula of Baja California (Nelson and Goldman 1909, 1931). Both subspecies are known only by the type specimens (Alvarez-Castañeda 2000). The type localities are Llano de Yrais, opposite Magdalena Island, Baja California Sur, and Trinidad Valley, northwest base of San Pedro Martir Mountains, state of Baja California, for the 2 races, respectively. Dragoo et al. (1990) and Waithman and Roest (1977) determined that these subspecies are junior synonyms of *V. m. mutica*. Herein, I report the finding of 2 additional specimens from Baja California.

On 16 February 2000, I was given 1 adult female kit fox by a local resident. He obtained it at 15 km S, 55 km W of Vizcaino, in the Biosphere Reserve of Vizcaino Desert, Baja California Sur, México (27°23'43"N, 114°03'25"W). A 2nd individual was observed 17 February 2000 near a pond at 0700 hours at 8 km S, 30 km W of Vizcaino, Baja California Sur (27°27'02"N, 113°54'14"W). These locations are 385 km northwest of Llano de Yrais in Baja California Sur and 525 km southeast of Trinidad Valley in the state of Baja California. The habitat of this area is dominated by scrub vegetation: saladilla (*Frankenia palmeri*), palo adan (*Fouquieria diguetii*), incienso (*Encelia* sp.), copalquin (*Pachycormus discolor*), and sangregado (*Euphorbia misera*). The climate is warm and dry in summer with rainfall occurring in winter; mean annual temperature is 20°C.

The skin, skull, and skeleton of the female are on deposit in the Centro de Investigaciones Biológicas del Noroeste (CIB 5000). Dimensions recorded (in mm) are: total length,

720; tail length, 270; hind foot length, 117; ear length, 82; total length of the skull, 111.2; basal length, 108.1; interorbital breadth, 23.2; postorbital breadth, 21.0; nasal length, 34.8; nasal breadth, 8.9; maxillary toothrow length, 51.2; mandibular toothrow length, 56.8. Examination of the specimen showed neither pigmented sites of implantation nor development of the nipples.

Although no formal studies of *Vulpes velox* were conducted on the peninsula of Baja California, and habitats and fauna on most of the peninsula are protected within a Biosphere Reserve, the Mexican government listed the species as threatened (Norma Oficial Mexicana 1994). I believe more research should be conducted on kit foxes to determine their status in Baja California.

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