

557-02-1998

WESTERN KINGBIRD

During the Fall of 1998 I have made several trips to Shenango Reservoir to monitor birds for pleasure and for documentation purposes. Most of the time I have concentrated on the passerines and shorebirds along the southeast shore of Shenango.

On the early evening of Friday, September 25th I made a circuitous route back to State Route #258 by way of Valley Road. This riparian area is dotted with a few farms and homes, but much of it is excellent field, edge and wetland area.

At 4:33 PM I was driving south on Valley Road when I slowed down in my car to view a robin-sized bird perched on the wires about a quarter mile from the intersection with Route #238. I slowed down to look at the bird which I viewed with Bausch and Lomb 8x42 Elites. It was obvious to me by the overall shape of the bird that it was a kingbird due its prominent head, large bill and full-bodied look.

I was able to view its grayish back and wings, contrasting nicely with a yellowish coloration on the breast and belly. Small black hairs were noticeable around the bill. In an instant it was being bombarded by Eastern Bluebirds and it flew off to some high trees.

For nearly twenty minutes I searched before relocating it again. I was able to put my Kowa 20x60 spotting scope on it from a distance of 150 feet and get a much clearer and longer view of the bird.

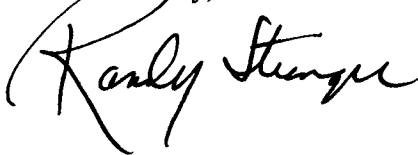
Again, it showed the distinctive kingbird format with the prominent build seen in good size comparison with Cedar Waxwings, Eastern Phoebe, and the incessant Eastern Bluebirds which were aggravated by its presence.

For nearly ten minutes I was able to see the bird through the scope at 20 to 50 power quite clearly and study its fairly long black tail which was neatly lined on the sides with white feather edgings. The combination of this field mark with the others led me to conclude the presence of a WESTERN KINGBIRD.

In all of my viewings the sun was behind me and the distances were at first about thirty feet and then about 150 seen with the scope. I am familiar with this species from my many trips to bird in western states. I have even seen an adult bird in North Georgia in early June 1977.

The bird was seen the following day by Joyce Hoffman and others in the same general area. It could not be relocated again on Sunday. The gray coloration on the back, side, and wings, with the white tailing linings on the edge of black tail, plus the yellow wash on the breast and belly clearly eliminate Eastern Kingbird. The location of the white tail edgings will eliminate Cassin's.

Randy C. Stringer
Grove City, PA



MERCER COUNTY
VALLEY ROAD

9/25/98 R. Stringer

9/26/98 Joyce Hoffman

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round One

Species: Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*)

Date of Sighting: 25 September 1998 to 26 September 1998

Location: VALLEY ROAD

County: MERCER

Observer(s): Randy Stringer

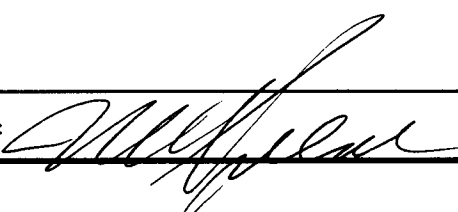
Date of Submission: 1998

Submitted by: Randy Stringer

WRITTEN DESCRIPTION YES PHOTO NO SPECIMEN NO RECORDING NO

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A				Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
D. Couchman			X					
T. Floyd								X
P. Hess				X				
R. Ickes			X					
J. McWilliams			X					
B. Reid			X					
P. Rodewald			X					
TOTALS			5	1				1
DECISION			X					

Comments: 5/1/1

Signature (Secretary): 

Date: 1/4/01