



Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*)

Near Jacksonville, Indiana County, 29 July 2005

This bird was discovered on 28 July 2005. I searched for it the following evening and the bird appeared after a short wait.

It was recognized as a flycatcher by the large headed appearance, with the "crest" of the head rear of the crown, straight bill and rather erect posture. It also flew out of the trees several times to capture insects and returned to the same tree each time, typical of flycatchers.

When perched, it was alert with its crown raised emphasizing the head shape as it looked around, presumably searching for flying insects.

DESCRIPTION:

- The bird was about the size of a robin, with a medium length tail, and appeared a bit large headed.
- Entire head, back, throat and upper breast light gray. The ear coverts were a darker gray compared to the head, forming a dull mask.
- Bill straight, pointed, and medium length. The bristles around the bill could be seen through the scope. The bill and feet were black.
- The wings were blackish, with dull white edges to the primaries, secondaries and tertials.
- The tail was blackish, with white outer retrices, forming a narrow white border on both sides of the tail. The tail was not noticeably notched.
- The lower breast, belly and undertail coverts were yellow.

The bird uttered a low call note while perched. The call was short and low, like a clucking sound.

I have seen Western Kingbirds in Minnesota, South Dakota, Washington, California, Arizona, and Texas. This was the first Western Kingbird I have seen in Pennsylvania.

COMPARISONS WITH OTHER SPECIES **(*Myiarchus* flycatchers and similar Kingbirds)**

Great-crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*) – This common species does have a similar plumage to the kingbird, however it is larger bodied, and proportionally larger headed, and has a larger bill. It is darker gray on the breast, brownish on the crown and back, brighter yellow below, and has rufous in the wings and tail.

Ash-throated Flycatcher and Brown-crested Flycatcher (*M. cinerascens* and *M. tyrannulus*) – ash-throated has been recorded in Pennsylvania, brown-crested has not. Both are similar to the great-crested, so they can be eliminated using the general points described for the great-crested.

Cassin's Kingbird (*Tyrannus vociferans*)– this species resembles the western however it has a darker gray head and upper breast with a more contrasting white chin and malar. The tail is narrowly tipped white. When worn the white tip may not be noticeable but it always lacks white sides to the tail.

Couch's and Tropical Kingbird (*T. couchii* and *T. melancholicus*) – Neither species has been recorded in Pennsylvania. Both are superficially similar to western, however they have notched tails lacking any white borders, darker ear coverts, larger bills, and are darker gray on the head and upper breast, with a greenish tinge to the back.

Submitted by:

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Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round Two

Species: Western Kingbird (Tyrannus verticalis)

Date of Sighting: 28 July 2005 to 29 July 2005

Location: NEW JACKSONVILLE

County : INDIANA

Observer(s): Mike Fialkovich, Geoff Malosh m.obs.

Date of Submission: 2005

Submitted by:): Mike Fialkovich, Geoff Malosh

Written Description: Yes

Photo: Yes

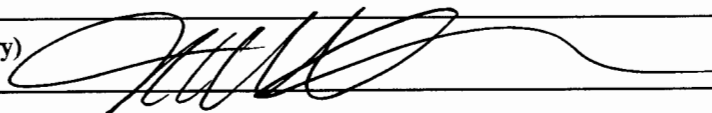
Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	Abstain
R. Wiltraut T. Johnson	X							
A. Guarente	X							
P. Guris	X							
J. Stanley								
E. Witmer	X							
R. Leberman Heller	X							
M. Sharp	X							
TOTALS	6							
DECISION	X							

Comments: 6/0

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

9/5/06