



UNUSUAL SIGHTING DOCUMENTATION

Species (common & scientific): Gray Kingbird (Tyrannus dominicensis)

Number of Individuals: 1 **Sex(es):** ?

Age(s) & Plumage(s): Probably 1st winter

Date Seen: 12/13/04 & 12/16/04 **Time: Approx.** 1PM to 3PM & 8AM to 11AM

Where Seen (Town/County): Pomeroy, Chester Co.

Exact Location (Park, Road, Lake): Shamrock Christmas Tree farm

Observer Reporting:

Name: August Mirabella

Address: 1443 Wheaton Lane

North Wales, PA 19454

E-mail: augustmirabella@aol.com

Telephone (optional): 215-368-0594

Other Observers (Only those who saw & identified the bird with you): Seen with several others. Originally ID'd by Larry Lewis 12/13.

Distance to Bird: 20 feet minimum.

Viewing Conditions (Sky, weather, position of sun relative to you): Various conditions.

Optical Equipment Used: 7X42 Zeiss Bins & Leica 77APO w/20-60X Zoom

Habitat:

Description (only what you observed; size relative to other species present; posture, body shape & proportions; colors & patterns of plumage: I am submitting this mainly for the video I took. It was typical kingbird shape and size. My first reaction was to its large black bill. Contrary to Sibley's, the bird had a considerable amount of brown tones throughout which I assume indicates a young bird. The crown had a brownish stripe through it that was more prominent when raised. The dark mask from the bill through and behind the eye seems to be the most definitive feature. The under wings were light, the tail was slightly forked and dark, and the legs were black. The undersides were off white. The primaries, tertials, and wing coverts had considerable brown tones with light feathered edges.

Behavior (Be as specific as possible about what the bird was doing): It is always amazing to watch these winter flycatchers find various insects in below freezing temperatures. Thus, much of the time it was observed, it was low to the ground or on the ground searching for food. I only saw it catch a large insect once. It also was seen early on the 16th sitting in the sun low to the ground with its wings hanging, apparently trying to warm up. It was very clumsy when it tried to fly, only moving a couple of feet at a time and banging into branches. It was assumed to be in trouble due to the cold and lack of food. It was also seen once on the telephone wire and sitting high in a tall evergreen

Vocalizations: None

Supporting Evidence if Any (include with report):

My video is being submitted with this documentation. I think the color balance control was set wrong for a while, so that the bird looks grayer than it actually was.

Separation from Similar Species (How you eliminated others): It seems the well defined mask is the best mark to separate it from the similar Thick-billed and Loggerhead Kingbirds. The Loggerhead has a darker head all over and from the pictures I've seen, also whiter under parts contrasting with the darker upper. The Thick-billed also has a heavier bill but this bird had a big bill and I am not experienced enough to know if it was different. The Thick-billed should also have some level of yellow on the under parts.

Discussion (Anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it): A lot of experts saw it and apparently agree with the ID.

Previous Experience with this and/or Similar Species: Very little experience.

Are you positive of your ID? (Why or why not): As far as my limited experience allows, yes.

References:

During Observation: None

After Observation: Sibley's; my video, Internet photos

Date of report: 12/27/04

Signature of Observer: August Mirabella



Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round One

Species: Gray Kingbird (Tyrannus dominicensis)

Date of Sighting: 13 December 2004 to 18 December 2004

Location: POMEROY

County : CHESTER

Observer(s): Joe Meloney, Larry Lewis m.obs

Date of Submission: 2004

Submitted by: N. Haass, A. Mirabella, G. Malosh, A. Guarente, N. Pulcinella

Written Description: Yes

Photo: Yes

Specimen: No

Recording: Video

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

Comments: c/o

Signature (Secretary)



Date: 11/7/05