





561-01-2003

Rare Bird Documentation for PORC:

Species: Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*)

Number: 1

Sex, age, plumage: female

Date/time of observation:

Friday, 09 May, 2003, 6:25-8:00am

Location:

The bird was seen along the Loyalsock Creek, adjacent to the Williamsport Regional Airport in Williamsport, Lycoming County, PA.

Observer(s):

Bill Etter

1030 Old Bethlehem Road #2

Perkasie, PA 18944

better@netcarrier.com

215-258-0229

Wes Egli, Dave Ferry, Joe Lipar, Fred Stiner, Steve Pinkerton, Mark Kline and Joseph Yoder were also present. Many others observed the bird throughout the day.

Habitat: The bird was mainly seen fly-catching from a small snag in the middle of the Loyalsock Creek.

Conditions: Viewing conditions were very good; the early morning sun was bright, and illuminated the bird from behind our backs.

Distance / Optics: The flycatcher was seen at fairly close range for most of the time that I was present. I would estimate that the snag where it sat was within 50 yards of the roadside. I observed the bird through 8x24 binoculars and a 20-40x spotting scope.

Description:

Even at first glance, the bird was clearly unlike any expected bird. It was a contrast of dark and light: dark on the wings, rump and tail, and light on the back, head, breast and belly. It was observed side by side with an Eastern Kingbird, which provided a great study. Compared to the kingbird, it was roughly the same size, though appeared a bit larger mainly due to the length of the tail, which extended *several* (probably 4-5) inches beyond the primaries. In flight, the tail was even more remarkable! It was deeply forked, and streamed behind as the bird chased insects.

Under closer scrutiny, some color was apparent on the bird. It's flanks and part of the under-wing and belly were an unmistakable pink / salmon color. As mentioned, the head, back and breast were very light – nearly white, in fact. The bill and eye were black. The wings, rump, and much of the tail were dark as well, though not solidly black as might be

expected for a shrike. The tail streamers were black and white. It appeared to be dark on the inside edge, and light on the outer.

Identification: Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*). Adult female.

Behavior: The flycatcher caught insects from a small snag at the center of the creek for nearly the entire time I watched it. It also briefly perched in the trees on the far side of the creek.

Vocalizations: None.

Supporting evidence: None.

Separation from similar species:

The sheer length of this bird's tail alone eliminates nearly every other species. As mentioned, the tail extended 4-5 inches beyond the primaries as the bird sat. This, as well as several other characteristics described above, eliminates all kingbirds and both shrikes. Fork-tailed Flycatcher has a similarly lengthed tail, but is eliminated by the bright head and back, as well as by the presence of the pinkish wash on the flanks and belly.

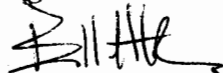
Previous experience: I've had no previous experience with scissor-tailed Flycatcher.

Certainty of identification: I am confident in my identification of this bird.

References consulted: I looked at The Sibley Guide to Birds, as well as several other prominent North American bird guides to determine the age and sex of the bird.

Date of report: 10 October, 2003. This report was made from notes made on the day the bird was seen. Regrettably, I did not intend to file a report, but it has come to my attention that few if any reports have been forwarded.

Signature of observer:



Bill Etter
Perkasie, PA

561-01-2003

Rare Bird Documentation for PORC:

TO: Nick Pulcinella, Sec.
PORC
613 HOWARD AVE
WEST CHESTER PA
19380

Species: Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*)

Number: 1

Sex, age, plumage: female

Date/time of observation:

May 8, 2003, 7PM until dark and Friday morning, May 9, first hour of daylight.

Location:

Loyalsock Creek and Mill St. next to the Williamsport Regional Airport in Montoursville PA.

Observer(s):

Dave Ferry

60 Marvin Lane

Williamsport, PA 17701

Lycohawk@aol.com

570-323-1590

Wes Egli, Dave Ferry, Joe Lipar, Fred Stiner, Steve Pinkerton, Mark Kline, Deuane Hoffman, Wayne Laubsher, and Joseph Yoder were also present. Many others observed the bird throughout the day.

Habitat: Riparian, streamside. Wooded stream bank to the west of Loyalsock Creek and open field/park/airport to the east.

Conditions: On Thursday evening light was not ideal, but good enough to see the rusty flanks of the bird and the obvious forked tail. In the morning, viewing conditions were excellent. The sun to the east provided excellent light as the bird perched to the west of us. It perched on the snag, and in trees on the west side of the creek.

Distance / Optics: Fairly close, probably 25 to 75 yards depending upon where it was perched. Optics used were my Swift 8.5 x 44 and Kowa 81mm 20x scope.

Description:

When I first got the call at approx. 6:50 PM, Joe Yoder said he had an interesting bird and he wasn't sure what it was. I immediately drove to Mill St. to meet Joe and Fred Stiner (found the bird) and the bird was perched on the far side of the Loyalsock Cr. My initial thought was that it was a shrike, but after a second look it was obviously not.

Identification: Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*). Adult female.

Behavior: Sallied from tree to snag catching insects.

Vocalizations: None.

Supporting evidence: Wayne Laubsher photographed the bird and should be submitting to PORC.

Separation from similar species:

The tail of this bird was unlike any I have ever seen in Lycoming Co. Although not as long as the male of the species, it certainly stood out. The forked tail, and rufous flanks eliminates the other flycatchers and kingbirds one might expect in central PA.

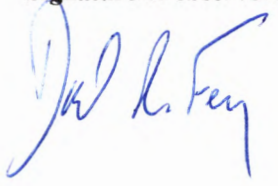
Previous experience: None.

Certainty of identification: 100% certain

References consulted: Sibley, Peterson

Date of report: December 15, 2003.

Signature of observer:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Ferry", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

David Ferry
60 Marvin LN
Williamspor PA

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round Two

Species: Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*)

Date of Sighting: 8 May 2003 to 9 May 2003

Location: MONTTOURSVILLE

County : LYCOMING

Observer(s): Dave Ferry, Bill Etter , Wayne Laubscher et al.

Date of Submission: 2004

Submitted by: Dave Ferry, Bill Etter , Wayne Laubscher

Written Description: Yes

Photo: Yes

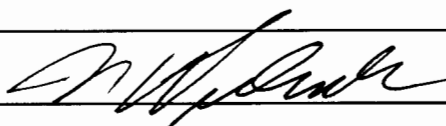
Specimen: No

Video: No

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

Comments: 6/0

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

4/29/05