

2001-80

ACCEPTED

R. 26 Sep 01 (c)

2001-007
CFO-ORC FILE # ~~2000-007~~

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD UNUSUAL RECORD

Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species: Alder Flycatcher | Empidonax alnorum
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)

Date(s): 19 May 2001

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: ? Plumage: Breeding Adult

Locality: Jumbo SWA (east side picnic area) Elevation: 3600'

Nearest town: Sedgwick County: Sedgwick

Time(s) observed: 1 PM

Duration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): 30 minutes

Other observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):

Joe Wainmose
Dave Ely

Other observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers)

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):

overcast but fairly bright day, light mostly from behind me

Optical equipment used (e.g. power, types): _____

Distance, and how measured: as close as 15'

If photographed, type of equipment and film: _____

Who else photographed the bird? _____

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying):

Bird was foraging for flying insects (mostly midges) from canopy willow thicket edge along the southeast shore of Jumbo Res. Bird tended to stay low (within 5' of ground) and liked the south edge of the willow thicket best. Rarely flew to taller willows/cottonwoods nearby.

Describe in detail the bird's relative size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern. Include details of bill, wing and tail shape. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions and illustrations is not enough. Describe only what you actually observe in the field:

Large, dark empid. Color of upper parts pretty much a uniform dark olive-gray. Head flattened somewhat. Bill large with orange-yellow lower mandible. Two wing bars were dirty white. Somewhat "vested" with grayish wash across breast. Throat seemed quite white and was set off by darkness of face and wash across breast. Area between eye and bill (lores) was a little paler shade of green-gray than rest of head. Eye-ring was present but not obviously so when seen from a distance. At close range, was whitish and indistinct behind the eye but not markedly so much as some other empids (for ex., Cordilleran). Underparts pale, being whitish gray on breast below the grayish upper breast wash and distinctly yellowish on the lower belly and undertail. When the bird flew on certain occasions it really gave a green-yellow impression (dark green above, lt yellow below), esp. evident when the bird was

Description (continued):

flying away from the observer. Primary extension seemed moderately long. Same for the tail. Basically, the quick impression this bird gave was of a long-billed, long & slender empid, darkish green in color with a lower belly yellow wash, long billed with a modest eye-ring, and fairly long primary extension. It flicked its wings and tail infrequently but conspicuously.

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):

This was the clincher. The call note was a distinct "pip", not "whit". We watched carefully to make sure this note was coming from this empid and it was. Did not hear the song.

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird:

Riparian strip around a lake shore in extreme northeastern CO.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

The size, color, bill length clearly put it in the "Trail's" group. Primary extension and eye-ring indicated Alder. Call was clearly not willow.

Primary extension not great enough to be a Pewee.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

I have seen and heard perhaps 20 birds in the Northeast (Vermont - New Hampshire) in recent years that were singing on territory that I knew were Alders. I feel I have seen perhaps 10 others in CO but they were always silent.

List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

a) at time of observation:

b) after observation:

Nat'l. Geo 3rd Sibley
"Empidonax challenge" series

This report was written from reports made during after observation from memory
Date and time report was written: 20 May 2001

Reporting observer: David Leatherman Signature: David Leatherman

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