

34.92-55  
A

DOCUMENTATION OF LATILONG PAPE BIRD SIGHTING  
FOR  
THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' RECORDS

Species: Eastern Wood Pewee | Contopus virens  
(Vernacular name) | (Scientific name)

If you watch birds solely for your own enjoyment, a written description of your observations is unnecessary. But, if you have seen something unusual, and would like to share this with others, a written description is essential. Compilers of regional bird lists must insist that their records be scientifically sound; future bird students--those studying occurrences 50 years from now--must have a written record on which to depend. By providing the verifying written description, you are employing a basic rule of the scientific method.

We recognize that experienced field observers can provide important and reliable records, if supported by an adequate verifying description. Thus this request is an effort to perpetuate your record by obtaining concrete evidence which may be permanently preserved for examination by others in the future. This procedure is required for every extraordinary observation, irrespective of the observer.

Date (s): July 26, 1992 Time Bird Seen: 8:45 AM to 9 AM

Locality: Colorado City Pueblo County Colorado  
Eastern Wood Pewee is not recorded in Trinidad latilong # 26 in  
Nearest town, county and state: Current latilong study.

Optical equipment: 10 x 40 Zeiss Binocular

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: Male Plumage: Adult

Light conditions: Good

Distance from bird, and how measured: 20 yards - estimated

Describe the bird's overall behavior:

The bird perched atop oak trees & was flycatching from these open perches. Occasionally it would chase other pewees.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

Dense oak trees 25-30 feet high. Elevation 6200'.  
There were a few other deciduous & conifer tree species mixed with the scrub oak.

Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address):

None

Describe in great detail the bird which you saw. Emphasize particularly the field marks used to identify the bird, but include a complete description of the bird. Include size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern; details on shape or size of bill, wings, and tail. (Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions is not enough.) Describe what you actually saw in the field.

Overall pattern was dull brown upper parts / light + dirty yellowish-white under parts. Size was about the same as nearby Western Wood Pewees. Head was brown, eye was black with no eyering. Back was dull brown slightly lighter than head. Tail was dark brown / slightly notched. Chest was slightly vested with a dusky vest opened at center of breast. Center of breast was dull yellowish white as was belly / under tail cover. Wings were brown becoming darker in primaries. Each wing had two faint dusky white wing bars.

I did not see legs well but they appeared dark. The bill had a dark upper mandible and a conspicuous yellow-orange lower mandible with a dark tip.

Describe the bird's calls or sounds, if heard; including method of delivery-- i.e., from perch, in flight, etc.:

Repeated most often was a high-pitched - peea-weee

Repeated less often was a high pitched - wee-yecwww with the last syllable descending

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

Western Wood Pewee has a much different - lower pitched & less shrill call. Western Wood Pewee call appears harsher & deeper. I checked the bills of Western Wood Pewees that morning of 7-26-92. The bills were either solid black or had slightly yellowish lower mandibles much duller than the brighter yellow-orange of Eastern Wood Pewee. The vests of the Western Wood Pewees also came further down the chest while these field marks may vary in individual Pewees, they may be helpful in conjunction with the call. The call was the most assuring distinction I noticed.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

I have seen & heard both Eastern & Western Wood Pewees in many areas of the USA but this bird was my first Eastern Wood Pewee in Colorado

This report was written from notes made during ☒ after ☐ observation; from memory ☐.

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Return Form To: CFO Records Committee  
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Denver Museum of Natural History  
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Denver, CO 80205