

LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

This form is intended as a convenience in reporting observations of species on the Louisiana Bird Records Committee (LBRC) Review List. The LBRC recommends the use of this form or a similar format when submitting records for review to assure that all pertinent information is accounted for. Attach additional pages or files as necessary. Please print or type for hard copy. For electronic copy, be sure to save this file to your computer before entering text. Attach field notes, drawings, photographs, or tape recordings, if available. Include all photos for more obscurely marked species. When completed (if hard copy), mail to Secretary, Louisiana Bird Records Committee, c/o Museum of Natural Science, 119 Foster Hall, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-3216, or e-mail electronic copy as an attachment to Paul Edward Conover at <zoiseaux@lusfiber.net> .

1. English and Scientific names: [Cassin's Kingbird](#) (*Tyrannus vociferans*)
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):
[One 1st winter \(formative plumage\)](#).
3. Parish: [Vermilion](#)
Specific Locality: [Meridian Line Rd., White Lake WMA, 8.4 mi S of Wright, LA](#)
4. Date(s) when observed: [16 December 2024](#)
5. Time(s) of day when observed: [3:35 pm](#)
6. Reporting observer and city/state address

Reporting observer: Erik I. Johnson
City: Sunset
State: LA
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s): [None, I was birding solo](#).
8. Other observers who independently identified the bird(s): [None known](#).
9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): [Clear. I had a variety of views of the bird from all directions](#).
10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): [Vortex 10x42 razor binoculars; Nikon D7200 SLR with 150-600 f/4.5-6.3 Sigma lens. All in good condition](#).
11. Distance to bird(s): [I was as close as 50 feet from the bird. It was consistently above](#)

me in trees or on utility lines.

12. Duration of observation: I spent about 45 minutes with this bird and the other yellow-bellied *Tyrannus*, based on timestamps of first and last photos.

13. Habitat: Agricultural to the north, Intracoastal Waterway and scrubby treeline along banks to south.

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation):

The bird was foraging and alertly scanning the sky for flying bugs in a mixed *Tyrannus* "flock." It periodically sallied out, returning to the same or nearby perch with an insect. It remained in the upper 2/3 of the trees or on overhead utility lines, giving me open views of the bird against the clear sky.

15. Description (include only what was actually seen, *not what "should" have been seen*; include if possible: total length/relative size compared to other familiar species; body bulk, shape, proportions; bill, eye, leg, and plumage characteristics. Stress features that separate it from similar species, *or for species that are known to hybridize frequently, stress features that help eliminate possible hybrids*):

The bird was mixed with other *Tyrannus* along the E-W portion of Meridian Line Road at its terminus along Intracoastal Waterway. In addition to this bird, there were 3 Western Kingbirds, 1 Couch's, 1 Tropical/Couch's (leaning Couch's), 2 Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, and 2 Vermilion Flycatchers. This bird stood out as being notably darker. I was initially approaching from the east, thus looking west, somewhat into the sun, but soon got "under" and past the birds so was able to see them well to the north and east, with the sun more to my back.

I spent a good bit of time with this bird, as Cassin's was my first impression, but the more I photographed it, the more I was able to see a pale outer edge to the outer rectrix. I managed to convince myself it was just a dark Western. Even so, this bird in direct comparison with the 3 Western Kingbirds consistently looked dark, and I left scratching my head a little. I submitted to eBird as a Western, and Steve Cardiff corrected my submission. I pinged Van Remsen, who agreed it looked right for a Cassin's. I also explored more photos in Macaulay, and could see examples of pale (but not bright white) edging along the outer web of the outer rectrix.

In examining the photos, I think I can see a molt limit within the greater coverts with the outer 3 appearing shorter and browner (retained juvenile), so I believe this is a 1st winter bird in formative plumage.

16. Voice: Not heard. I tried some playback for all for yellow-bellied *Tyrannus* (Western, Cassin's, Couch's, and Tropical), but none were terribly responsive and they remained silent with the exception of one brief call belted out by a Couch's (as I was watching that bird).

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation): Not a Tropical/Couch's by having more gray in the breast, a smaller bill, and a black (not brownish) tail. Ruled out Western based on head pattern and limited pale (not white) along outer webbing of R6, per guidance from Steve and Van.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): Photos by me. I created a Google Photos album: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/cfaLbVe4pBtNjjUJ7>. Also added to eBird: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S205688424>.

19. Previous experience with this species: My 2nd one seen Louisiana, with the first just two days prior; that was a solo bird, not mixed with other *Tyrannus*. I've seen them out west here and there, most recently in spring 2021, including in places where they overlap with Western Kingbird.

20. Identification aids: (list books, illustrations, other birders, etc. used in identification):

a. at time of observation: [Merlin and Audubon apps](#).

b. after observation: [Macaulay Library of photos, filtering by similar time of year](#).

21. This description is written from:

	notes made during the observation.	Are notes attached?	
X	notes made after the observation.	At what date?	I typed a few notes in eBird after re-submitted as Cassin's, probably a couple days after the observation.
X	memory		
X	study of images		

22. Are you positive of your identification? If not, explain: [Yes](#).

23. Date: [14 February 2025](#)

Time: [8:10 am](#)

24. May the LBRC have permission to display in whole or in part this report and accompanying photos on the LOS-LBRC website and LBRC Facebook page? [Yes](#).

If yes, may we include your name with the report? [Yes](#)