

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: *

Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*)

2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage): *

1 adult sex unknown

3. Parish: *

Cameron

4. Specific Locality: *

Trosclair Rd.

5. Date(s) when observed: *

9/2/23

6. Time(s) of day when observed: *

around 9:20am

7. Reporting observer: *

Esme Rosen

8. Other observers accompanying reporter who also identified the bird(s):

9. Other observers who independently identified the bird(s):

So far no, and I expect the bird won't be refound

10. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): *

Very bright slightly over exposed light at a distance, good but slightly side lit light when closer

11. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): *

Zeiss 8x binoculars

12. Distance to bird(s): *

10ft?

13. Duration of observation: *

5-6 minutes

14. Habitat: *

remnant chenier, scrubby road edge, perched up on a dead stick

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

May have come in to mob tape, but unresponsive to playback of Couch's or Tropical. Eventually was flushed by a passing truck and could not be refound despite a serious effort

16. 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): *

Here is my description from the field: yellow bellied kingbird, with yellow creeping all the way up the chest and with a greenish back, unlike Western. Visually very good for tropical, with long somewhat thin hooked beak, peaked head, and less vibrant yellow below. Generally a slender bird with a ratty worn tail. A more detailed description with reference to the photos is given in the similar species section.

17. Voice:

The bird only called once, as it flushed. Since there was a truck passing at this time it was tricky to hear well, but it sounded fluttery and high, more like a Tropical than a Couch's. I am 70-80% sure this was enough to identify it as a Tropical. Combined with the visual field marks described below, I am completely convinced the identification is correct.

18. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation): *

See comment above about voice. As for visual field marks, the bill was notably very long, with a strong hook and a thin base. The culmen was fairly straight, unlike the more curved Couch's. The long beak was obvious the instant I saw the bird, and is well outside the range of any Couch's I've ever seen, or seen photographed. In my experience, Couch's have a fairly uniform short bill length, while Tropicals vary from extreme examples like this bird and shorter billed birds. The forehead was sloped and the head shape flat and angular, unlike the more rounded head of Couch's. Also, the breast was a duller yellow than the belly, making for little contrast between the throat and breast. In the distant pictures it still looks fairly bright, but this is a product of the lighting; in those photos, you can see that the belly is an even brighter yellow, though. The body structure was also more reminiscent of a Tropical; it was a slender looking bird, with a long-looking tail. Cin-Ty Lee addresses the coloration of the primaries as a major difference between the species; Couch's should have black primaries that contrast with the secondaries, while Tropical has a more uniform coloration, with pale-edged primaries and little contrast between the primaries and secondaries. I had a tough angle for viewing this, but there was no visible contrast between the primaries and the secondaries, and it appears the primaries have at least some pale edging. Lee also notes the primary extension on average is shorter on Tropical; this could not be accurately assessed on this bird because of the angle and how it was holding its wings, but the longer looking tail is suggestive of shorter primaries. As a side note, it seems the date is also much better for Tropical; Couch's tend to not show up until later. Obviously this isn't definitive in any sense though.

19. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): *

Photos attached

20. Previous experience with this species: *

Some experience with both species in south Texas, and with Tropical in Arizona, California, and Ecuador

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

National Geographic Bird Guide and YouTube lecture by Cin-Ty Lee (link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oes1wglPZoU>)

22. Identification aids used when?

At time of sighting

After observation

None used

23. Are you positive of your identification? If not, explain: *

Yes

24. Date report completed: *

9/2/23

25. 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

26. If yes, may we include your name with the report? *

Yes











