

LBRC Report Form

1. English and Scientific names: Western Flycatcher - *Empidonax difficilis*
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):
1
3. Parish:
Plaquemines
4. Specific Locality:
Morel's Woods
5. Date(s) when observed: 11/5/23
6. Time(s) of day when observed: early afternoon
7. Reporting observer: Esme Rosen
8. Other observers accompanying reporter who also identified the bird(s):
originally discovered by David Muth's group, which included Mark Meunier, Tu Wren,
and Joan Garvey, who were still present when we arrived; I was also with Nick Ramsey
9. Other observers who independently identified the bird(s):
10. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of
light): sometimes a little shaded, but generally good
11. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Zeiss binoculars
12. Distance to bird(s): 15ft
13. Duration of observation: 5 min
14. Habitat: Coastal woodlot, consisting of old-growth live oaks with a decent
understory
15. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and
stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): Responded
aggressively to Pacific-Slope call, coming in fairly close before vanishing

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):

Bright yellowish Empidonax, olive green on back, head, and chest, yellow below, with moderately long bill, orange underneath, fairly short primary projection. Throat paler

17. Voice: not heard

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

Least Flycatcher is easily eliminated by the color. The two main other contenders would be Yellow-bellied and Acadian. The latter can be eliminated by the shorter bill and shorter, less pointed primaries, among other more subtly characteristics. Yellow-bellied is more similar, but this bird is visually perfect for Western, with the bold white eye ring that has a teardrop shape and the peaked crest. A few more subtle marks are that this bird was overall olive above, with even a faint brownish cast at some angles, as opposed to Yellow-bellied which should be more green above. Structurally, this bird is also slightly better for Western, with a longer looking tail and bill. Besides the field marks, it should also be noted that Western is the more expected of the three yellow Empids at the date, as Yellow-bellied and Acadian are both always completely gone by the end of October, with no November records of Yellow-bellied, and very few of Acadian. This bird also fits into a general pattern this fall of Western Flycatchers roaming east this fall, with two additional records from Louisiana (Peveto, J. Bosler and Couturie, M. Meunier), as well as records from Florida, Virginia, New Jersey, and Connecticut.

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

photos attached, additional photos also available here

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S153906942>

20. Previous experience with this species: Extensive experience with Western from California and Nevada, and with similar species from south Louisiana

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

I referred to Heindel and Pyle's article when writing the similar species section of this report

22. Identification aids used when?

After observation

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

yes

24. Date report completed:

12/8/23

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



