

Long Point Bird Observatory Rare Bird Report Form

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Canadian Migration
Monitoring Network



Réseau canadien
de surveillance
des migrations



In order that any sight record or banding of a rare species can be confirmed for the historical record, it must be properly documented. LPBO cooperators are therefore asked to complete a form in every case where a rarity is being claimed. Guidance as to which species are considered rare in the Long Point area may be obtained from the LPBO Program Coordinator and in the Long Point Area Checklist found in *A Birding Guide to Long Point Area*. Each observer should prepare his/her description independently and preferably before consulting any field guides or other literature.

PLEASE PRINT.

Species claimed: Ash-throated Flycatcher

No. of birds: 1

Age: unknown

Sex: unknown

Date(s): May 29-30, 2013

Place: Long Point Bird Observatory Old Cut Research Station and Lighthouse Crst., Long Point, Ontario.

Time(s) of Observation: 0800 to 0900 and sporadically throughout the day.

Who first saw the bird(s): Stu Mackenzie

Who first identified it: Stu Mackenzie

Other observers (names and addresses):

Ron Ridout, Jody Allair, Denis Lepage, Ted Maddeford, Dayna LeClair, Richard Skevington, Mick Townsend, Richard Dobbins, Simon Dostaler, Jannick Champagne, Antje Kuechler, Jenny Auxier.

c/o LPBO

Any who disagree: No

Your previous experience with the species: Observed numerous times in the southwest United States and Mexico.

Your previous experience with any closely similar species:

(a) Formerly: Extensive experience with Great-crested. Minimal experience with nine other *Myiarchus* species.

(b) Same day: Many Great-crested in the area.

Species present for comparison: Great-crested Flycatcher

Which were beside it for comparison: Great-crested Flycatcher

Distance from observer(s): 10-100 m

How measured: Estimate

Optical aids used: 8.5x42 Swarovski EL

Weather conditions (at time of observation)

Visibility: clear

Cloud Cover: 0

Lighting: Bright

Wind direction and speed: Light south-westerlies - 10 Knots from the southwest

A strong warm front from the southwest pushed through the region the week prior to the observation. Maps below show a warm front from the southwest moving through southern Ontario on May 27 followed by steady and strong south-westerly winds on May 28.

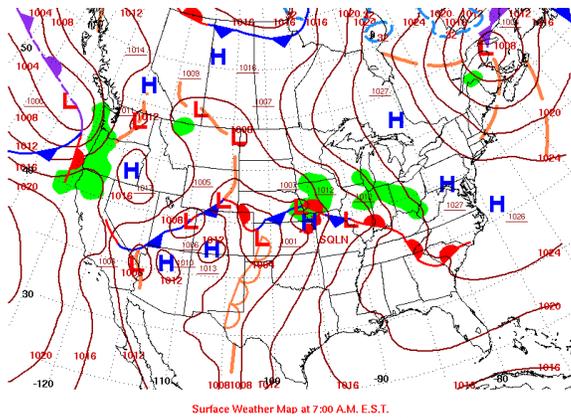


Figure 1. Weather Map from May 27, 2013.

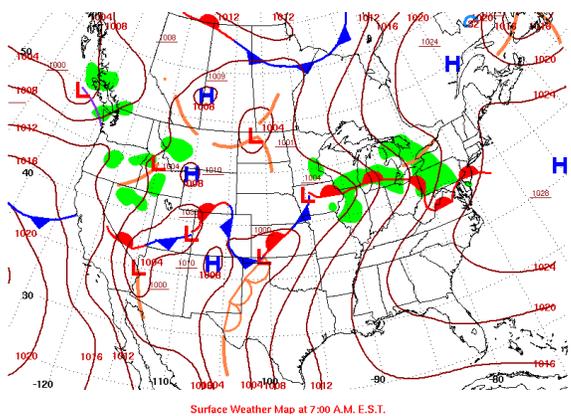


Figure 2. Weather Map from May 28, 2013.

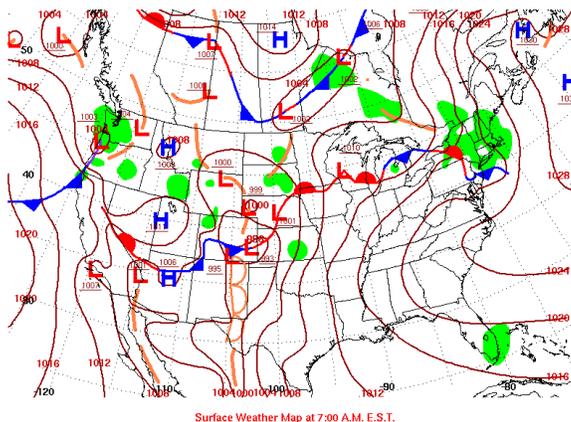


Figure 3. Weather Map from May 29, 2013.

Circumstances:

I was conducting the morning census for the Long Point Bird Observatory's Migration Monitoring Program when I discovered an interesting *Myiarchus* flycatcher about half way through. The day was quite active for late May with many late-migrant warblers, *Empidonax*, and Great-crested Flycatchers. While on Lighthouse Crst., I noticed a petite, slender *Myiarchus* foraging about 5m up in a Scot's pine. The birds small, slender shape, and upon closer inspection with my binoculars, a very pale complexion on the yellowish belly and light-gray washed breast and throat was very apparent. I immediately sent out an alert to the local rarity contingent and LPBO staff and volunteers. While waiting for `back-up`, I watched the bird closely and was able to hear some calls during an interaction with a Great-crested. Some of the staff and volunteers got on the bird relatively quickly and after about half an hour Ron Ridout, Jody Allair, and Denis Lepage arrived. With some effort everyone else was independently able to find and definitively identify the bird.

Description:

Give separate description for (a) in the field (b) in the hand. Include full measurements and wing formula with hand descriptions. Include reasons for the elimination of other species.

I first spotted the *Myiarchus* (large flycatcher with brown upperparts, distinct wing bars, rufous tail, and grayish-white and yellow underparts) from about 20m and at first glance noticed a number of salient, albeit subtle, features distinguishing this bird from the many Great-crested Flycatchers that were also around that day. What first drew my attention to the bird was the petit, slender appearance in terms of overall shape and giss, but also in terms of head and bill size. Upon closer inspection with binoculars its overall pale appearance on both the yellowish-white underbelly blending into a grayish-white mid-section, and whitish-gray throat became apparent. The clincher for me plumage-wise was the pattern of the closed undertail pattern which revealed thin dark edging on the rufous outer rectricies that became thicker toward the end of the tail forming a concave terminal band. Special attention to this feature enabled the separation of all other `possible` *Myiarchus*. I was fortunate enough to have examined a number (>10) of Great-crested earlier that morning which helped to make this bird stand out. On two occasions I was able to directly compare the two species within 25-50m of each other and observed a brief interaction between both species.

The bird called twice: Once alone shortly after finding the bird, and another about 5 minutes later following a brief encounter with a Great-crested. The calls it made were a brief sharp single note followed by a short, two-syllable rising raspy - `perr-weep`. Following a brief interaction with a Great-crested it let out a soft Great-crested like `croak`, but much subdued, higher pitched, and short.

Behaviourally it was similar to the many Great-crested in the areas constantly stalking insects, but it was more often than not found mid-canopy, in the middle of the woodlot, or 5-10m from an edge, rarely observed on the forest edge or open perches like Great-crested often do. For most of the day, the bird was a ghost that took incredible patience to find and track. The bird would make periodic long flights (50-100m) throughout the woodlot which made it incredibly hard to track and locate, but despite this it was found and identified multiple times by different individuals.

Did you refer to any guides/other literature: no

(a) at the time: no

(b) afterwards: no

Finally, is this record 100% certain? Yes

Signed:



E-mail Address: smackenzie@birdscanada.org

Date: January 13, 2014

Mailing Address: c/o LPBO