

THE TYPE OF *EMPIDONAX WRIGHTII* BAIRD

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IN the course of some ornithological investigations at the United States National Museum, I examined the type of *Empidonax wrightii*. As a result, I became convinced that it represents the species currently known as *Empidonax griseus* and not the species that now passes under the name *wrightii*. This specimen, no. 7234 of the National Museum bird collection, was taken by Charles Wright at El Paso, Texas, where it was, of course, only a transient. No sex is indicated on the label, but its measurements indicate a small male or a female, probably the former. Notwithstanding the fact that its colors are brown with age, comparisons made at that time (November, 1937) by both Dr. Harry C. Oberholser and myself showed it to be indeed, in aggregate characters, a Gray Flycatcher. Dr. Oberholser has recently gone over the whole matter again and has reached the same conclusion. Furthermore, he assures me that this specimen, marked as the type, is unquestionably to be considered as such.

The name *E[mpidonax] wrightii* was provisionally proposed by Baird (Report Expl. and Surv. RR. Pacific, 9: 200 [in text], 1858) as a substitute for *Tyrannula obscura* Swainson, in case the latter should prove not to apply to the bird that Baird had in hand. Swainson's name is now generally regarded as unidentifiable, and Baird's has been universally applied to another species, long thought to be the only one of these two species occurring north or east of Arizona, and which has accordingly been known as *Empidonax wrightii*. Since, however, the name *wrightii* proves to apply to the bird subsequently described as *Empidonax griseus* Brewster ('Descriptions of supposed new birds from Western North America and Mexico', p. 87, Jan. 31, 1889 [= separate from 'The Auk,' 6: 87, Apr. 1889]), the Gray Flycatcher must be called *Empidonax wrightii* Baird. The bird currently known as Wright's Flycatcher, now without a technical name, may be called

***Empidonax oberholseri* nom. nov.**

Empidonax wrightii auct., nec Baird.

Type.—Adult male, no. 342070, U. S. National Museum, Biological Survey collection; Hart Prairie, San Francisco Mountain, Arizona, June 13, 1938; A. R. Phillips, orig. no. 352.

Specific characters.—Similar to *E. wrightii* Baird (= *griseus* Brewster), but tail longer; wing averaging shorter; upper parts, especially the crown, darker and more olivaceous (less grayish); bill less attenuated (relatively broader), the mandible often wholly dark brownish; outer tail-feather with outer web darker, less whitish, and thus less strongly contrasted with inner web.

Range.—Breeds in Transition and Canadian Zones of western North America, from Yukon, British Columbia, and western Alberta to southwestern California,

central Arizona (White and San Francisco Mts.), and north-central New Mexico. Winters from northern Mexico to Guatemala.

Remarks.—It gives me great pleasure to dedicate this species to Dr. Oberholser, whose unfailing assistance has made possible the preparation of this note. The necessity of shifting additional names in this troublesome genus is to be regretted. I believe, however, that the confusion can be minimized by retaining, at least temporarily, the current common names. I would therefore suggest that these two species now stand as:

Empidonax oberholseri. Wright's Flycatcher.

Empidonax wrightii. Gray Flycatcher.

For the use of specimens for comparison I am greatly indebted to the authorities of the U. S. National Museum and of the Biological Survey, and especially to Dr. Herbert Friedmann and Dr. Oberholser.

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