

The Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Muscivora forficata*) in South Carolina.—On the afternoon of November 6, 1928, near my camp on Edisto Island on the South Carolina coast, I saw a gray bird fly for a short distance in front of my car and alight on a fence post close beside the road. For a fraction of an instant I thought that it was a Mockingbird, an exceedingly common species, since it appeared about the size of a Mocker and showed white outer tail feathers as it flew. Almost instantly, however, I saw that the bird's tail was deeply forked, and before it lit on the fence post I knew that it was a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Muscivora forficata*), a species never before recorded in South Carolina.

When the bird lit on the fence post I stopped the automobile about twenty-five feet from it and, without leaving the car, my wife and I studied the bird for some ten or fifteen minutes. It paid no attention to the automobile; the afternoon sun was behind us, so that the visibility was excellent; and at that short range, with the bird perching quietly on the top of the fence post before us, we could see every detail even with the naked eye, while my eight-power binoculars revealed plainly even the bristles at the base of the bill. The identification, therefore, was as absolute as though we had held the bird in our hands.

It was in immature plumage. Head, neck and breast were ash-gray, the wings darker, the tail lighter than the wings except the terminal portion, which was dark, almost black. In flight the outer tail feathers were seen to be white. The tail was very distinctly forked but not nearly so deeply forked nor so long as in figures of the adult bird. The forked appearance was very marked when the bird was in flight but only slightly noticeable when the bird was perching, and the whole tail was not much longer in proportion to the body than in the Mockingbird. There was much less red or pink than in the adult. The under parts were in general light-gray but as the bird perched broadside to us, a distinct rosy tinge was visible on the flank. Once or twice, when the wings were lifted momentarily, we could see a much brighter pink or red (once it appeared orange) under the bend of the wing. Though the bird frequently erected the feathers of its head, no crown-patch was visible and I am sure that there was none. The eyes were very black and bright and the bird had a decidedly handsome, alert, trim look in spite of the absence of conspicuous bright colors. The brilliant flash of color that we saw from time to time as it lifted its wings was all the more noticeable in view of its general grayness.

After studying the bird with the greatest care, I started the motor and we went ahead slowly. We were within fifteen feet of the bird before it flew with a graceful, gliding motion, first to another post farther ahead and then southward across the fields to light on a tall stalk about 100 feet away.

This record, the first for South Carolina, was made a short distance outside the west gate of the plantation yard of Mr. G. W. Seabrook Sr., on Edisto Island about 45 miles by highway southwest of Charleston.—HERBERT RAVENEL SASS, *Charleston, S. C.*