

I wish to acknowledge to Dr. Alexander Wetmore and to Dr. John T. Zimmer my appreciation for their critical examination of this specimen, and for their able diagnosis of the characters demonstrated, and to George H. Lowery, Jr., for his criticism and comments in connection with the preparation of this paper.—THOS. D. BURLEIGH, *Fish and Wildlife Service, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.*

The wing-formula in *Empidonax trailli*.—Current literature places the Alder Flycatcher and its geographic representatives among those species of *Empidonax* that have the outer (tenth) primary longer than the fifth. This is only partially correct. It is true that, in *E. t. trailli*, the outer primary is normally a little longer than, or equal to, the fifth; but in *E. t. brewsteri* it is almost invariably shorter than the fifth. The difference, though slight, is so constant that I find it very important in the determination of specimens, together with the less olivaceous coloring of *brewsteri*. Size of bill does not seem important to me. It is interesting to note here the close parallel to the differences between *E. flaviventris* and the northern races of *E. difficilis*.

The taxonomy used herein is that of the 1931 A. O. U. Check-List. I do not wish to enter into a discussion of geographic variation or distribution at this time, when my notes are not available to me. It may be well to emphasize, however, that immatures are browner than spring adults and must not be compared with them. Some of the confusion which has occurred (especially in Oklahoma) is due to such comparison.—ALLAN R. PHILLIPS, *Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff, Arizona.*

Some differences between the Wright's and Gray Flycatchers.—During the long history of confusion of Wright's Flycatcher (*Empidonax "oberholseri"*)¹ and the Gray Flycatcher (*Empidonax "wrighti"*)², the impression has arisen that the two species are extremely difficult to distinguish in the hand, and impossible in the field. The former species is likewise thought to be closely similar to Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondi*). The writer's studies of the genus *Empidonax* in Arizona, both afield and in the museums, have brought out some previously neglected criteria to help distinguish these species.

In the field, I have repeatedly observed that the Gray Flycatcher wags its tail in the manner of a *Phoebe*, though less vigorously. This is in contrast to the tail-jerking motion that generally characterizes the genus *Empidonax*. On the few occasions on which I have shot a tail-wagging *Empidonax* from a distance, it has proved to be a Gray Flycatcher. I believe that this is a constant character; I have never seen a Gray Flycatcher jerk its tail, nor have I seen any other *Empidonax* wag its tail. Collectors should give this matter the very closest attention. If I am correct, the Gray Flycatcher, far from being among our most difficult species, is the easiest *Empidonax* to identify afield. There are other points that I find helpful, too. A fresh-plumaged Gray Flycatcher, especially a fall immature, is such a clear, clean, pale gray and white (devoid of olive tones), with rather conspicuously white-edged tail, as to be fairly distinctive, and the yellow base (in life) of the lower mandible is a reliable character at close range. Then, too, the Gray Flycatcher at all seasons frequents more open country than is favored by other *Empidonaces*, being found characteristically in open brush instead of dense bushes or trees. I do not mean to imply that any member of this genus is easy to identify

¹ *Empidonax wrighti* of the A. O. U. Check-list, fourth edition, 1931.—Ed.

² *Empidonax griseus* of the Check-List.—Ed.