

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.

afield. They are all difficult; but an observer who is thoroughly familiar with the various plumages in properly identified museum skins can distinguish many birds in the field. On the other hand, some species (*hammondi* and "*oberholseri*", for example) I am quite unable to distinguish afield, unless they sing; nor do they sing on migration, in my experience.

In the hand, one of the most important characters of Wright's Flycatcher is its very rounded wing. The outer (tenth) primary is normally *shorter than the fourth*—a fact that I do not find recorded in our literature. In the Gray, it is usually longer than the fourth but shorter than the fifth; in Hammond's, it is about equal to the fifth, or a little longer. In the last species, therefore, a measurement of the difference (fifth primary minus tenth) will seldom exceed one or two millimeters; in "*oberholseri*" it will be much greater, and I do not think any overlapping will be found (excluding, of course, specimens in molt). Unfortunately, I do not now have access to my notes, so cannot give exact measurements. Lengths of bill and tarsus are, of course, also of great value in determining specimens of *hammondi*.

Through the courtesy of the authorities of the U. S. National Museum, I was enabled to reexamine the type specimen of *Empidonax wrightii* Baird in the summer of 1941, after I had affirmed this new wing-formula character. In this specimen, the wing-tail difference is so nearly intermediate that I would prefer to withhold judgment on that basis; but Moore (Auk, 57: 357, 1940) states that the specimen is, on that basis, a Gray Flycatcher. At any rate, the type is a perfectly typical Gray Flycatcher in every other respect (wing formula, bill shape and color, outer web of outer rectrix, etc.).

Regardless of whether field studies should show the desirability of calling the Gray Flycatcher a northern race of *E. affinis*, I certainly do not consider Wright's Flycatcher conspecific with that or any other series.

Current literature assigns Wright's Flycatcher a more southerly winter range than the Gray, but the difference, if any, is very slight. It has been shown that Wright's Flycatcher winters north to southern Arizona (Monson and Phillips, Condor, 43: 109, 1941); and I have previously noted (Auk, 59: 427, 1942) that Guatemalan records are in error—the birds are mostly atypical specimens of *hammondi*.

The breeding range of Wright's Flycatcher, being more boreal zonally (as well as differing associationally) than that of the Gray, is thereby enabled to extend farther north and west. To the south and east, the limits of their breeding ranges nearly coincide. On migration in Arizona, the Gray Flycatcher seems to be an earlier migrant in spring than Wright's; fall data are not yet very satisfactory.—ALLAN R. PHILLIPS, *Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff, Arizona.*

Anser gambelli.—In the *Revue et Magazin de Zoologie* (Ser. 2) 4 (1): 7, January, 1852, Dr. G. Hartlaub gave comparative measurements for three specimens of White-fronted Geese from Texas and the southern part of North America and based upon them the new specific name, *Anser Gambelli*. The specific name is capitalized, as is the only other one in the paper (*Kaupii*) apparently dedicated to an individual, but nothing is said as to its significance. American ornithologists have assumed that the form was named for William Gambel, and Coues asserts this to be the case in his Check-List (Second Edition, 1882, p. 111). There he spells the term with one 'l' in the text and with two in a footnote indicating its pronunciation. In the A. O. U. Check-Lists we find the spelling *gambeli* in both the