



Figure 1. Ash-throated Flycatcher at Jones Beach West End, Nassau Co., New York, 2-7 November 1994. Photograph by Tom Vezo.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF NEW YORK STATE RARITIES 60: ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER

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On 2 November 1993, at approximately 12 noon, while concluding a morning of birding the barrier beaches, John Fritz and I made a final sweep through West End Field 2 in Jones Beach State Park, Nassau County. At the northern edge of the parking field we discovered an Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*) perched on a stalk of dried vegetation.

At first glance it appeared to be a Great Crested Flycatcher (*M. crinitus*). After carefully observing the bird to confirm its various field marks, we realized we had a rarity. Its head was brown, showing a gray ear patch. Its back also was brown with a rusty brown rump. The throat and breast were grayish white. The pale yellow on the belly extended into the undertail coverts. Its primaries were rufous with two distinct wingbars. Its outer tail feathers were darkly edged, and the undertail was all rusty. The bill was black, showing pink at the base.

Unfortunately, all other birders had left the area so we raced east on Ocean Parkway to Fire Island knowing that Tony Lauro was manning the hawk watch and excitedly told him of our find. He was able to accompany us back to West End to view this vagrant bird for himself. The Ash-throated Flycatcher remained in Field 2 for five days, seeming to prefer the Autumn Olive bushes surrounding the pavilion and north edge of the parking lot. It fed continually, snatching insects in the air or off the ground. It was easily approached and appeared undisturbed by close movement of the many observers.

According to Bull (1974), this western flycatcher breeds from Washington and Idaho to northern Mexico, east to the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, and is found in winter from southern Arizona and southern California to El Salvador. It is a rare vagrant east to the Atlantic coast from New Brunswick to Florida. Bull lists only two New York State records: at Larchmont, Westchester County, on 21 November 1970 and at Ridge, Suffolk County, on 1 December 1973 (Raynor and Rusica 1974). A third report is a sight record by P. Buckley at Riis Park on 10 May 1978 (Spencer 1978). A fourth record is verified by a photograph taken by R. Villani, also at Jones Beach West End on 21 November 1984 (DiCostanzo 1985).

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LITERATURE CITED

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