

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Western Kingbird in Savannah, Wayne County, NY, with Notes on Previous Records of Vagrant *Tyrannus* in This Area

I awoke on 5 October 2012 knowing that I had a busy day of birding ahead of me. I planned on going to Irondequoit Bay to look for the Black-headed Gull, and from there, to look for the Yellow-headed Blackbird at Van Dyne Spoor Road in Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. I arrived at Irondequoit Bay early, and had the Black-headed Gull in my scope almost immediately. After a while of watching the bird, I decided it was time to move on to Montezuma.

After a successful stop at Marten's Tract to look for Nelson's Sparrow, I proceeded onto Van Dyne Spoor Road. While driving down the road, I spotted a bird actively flycatching from the power lines. As soon as I saw the bird, I knew it had the potential to be something good. I was aware that vagrant *Tyrannus* flycatchers will show up in the East in the fall. I quickly pulled off to the side of the road, jumped out of my car, and put my binoculars on the bird. I immediately saw it was a flycatcher. The bird had a gray head and back, with a white throat and breast, yellow belly, and a black tail with white edges on both sides. I then realized it was a Western Kingbird.

I snapped a few photos (see p. 46 and the back cover of this issue) and called some other birders that I knew were in the area. Thankfully the bird was still there when they arrived. When I found it, it was the only bird there, and it was very conspicuous. The area the bird was in is just perfect for any flycatcher. There are open fields on both sides of the road, and the power lines provide the exposed perch to catch insects in flight. The kingbird would sit on the power line, wait for an insect, grab it, and return to the perch and eat it. The bird was very active, not sitting for long before catching another insect and moving up and down the road. The bird was very successful in getting food. After observing the bird for nearly two hours I made my way towards the marsh area of Van Dyne Spoor Road. When I pulled up, the Yellow-headed Blackbird was fairly close, perched and singing. It was quite the birding day.

Tyrannus flycatchers have a tendency to wander out of range, with many east coast records of western North American and tropical species during fall, from September to November. The vast majority of such records are coastal, but the Van Dyne Spoor Road area of the Montezuma Refuge has done remarkably well in this regard, recording Gray Kingbird (23 Oct 2010) and Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (25 Oct 2009) in addition to this Western Kingbird on 5 Oct 2012. That's quite impressive. Three different species of vagrant *Tyrannus* flycatchers, in the same inland area, all in October, within four years of one another.

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