

Olive-Sided Flycatcher

Contopus cooperi

STATUS

Threatened 

Not Listed 



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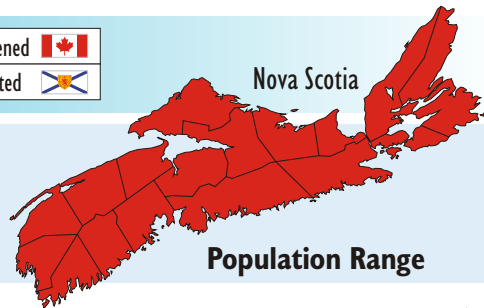
Species Description

The Olive-sided Flycatcher is a medium-sized (18-20 cm) songbird, with a large dark bill and short tail. It has a large head and brownish olive-grey on the face, back, and sides. The throat, centre of breast and belly are whitish, and the wings are dark with pale bars. Both sexes and juveniles look alike, but males are slightly larger.



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Found throughout Nova Scotia, but in dwindling numbers. Winters in Central and South America.



Habitat

They are found in early post-fire landscapes or clearings, and like to perch on the tops of tall trees or snags, from which they take off to catch flying insects. They have a preference for coniferous forest edges, and openings like meadows, rivers, bogs, swamps, and ponds.



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Olive-sided Flycatchers are found in the summer along the edge of the woods. Look for them at the tops of tall trees and snags near openings, and listen closely for its whistled song, "Quick, free beer!"

Interesting Points

- Males aggressively defend large territories around nesting sites - they sometimes knock squirrels out of trees to protect their eggs or chicks.
- They feed on flying insects, especially bees.
- Their song sounds like “quick, free beer!”, and their call is a rapid “pip pip pip”.



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Similar Species

Note:

The Alder and Yellow-bellied flycatchers also live in Nova Scotia and might be confused with this species.

Eastern Wood-pewee:

Smaller (15 cm); more prominent wing-bars; dirty white belly; upper part of bill dark, lower is yellowish. Song is a cheerful “pee-a-woo”.



Least Flycatcher:

Smaller (13 cm); conspicuous white eye ring; white wing bars; small bill and short tail. Song is “che-bec” and call “whit”.



Threats to Survival

- Although timber harvest could provide more habitat locally, studies have found lower breeding success in these areas.
- Loss of wintering habitat, which may have caused the serious decline throughout its range.



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How You Can Help

Participate in bird monitoring programs like the Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas and the Breeding Bird Survey. Support sustainable forestry operations, and learn to recognize this species and report sightings.



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Listening for birds

Contacts, Information, Sighting Reports & Stewardship Opportunities

Contact: Environment Canada (506) 364-5044 or www.ec.gc.ca

Info: www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca,

Sighting Reports: 1-866-727-3447 or sightings@speciesatrisk.ca

Stewardship: Bird Studies Canada 1-888-448-2473, www.bsc-eoc.org