

Olive-Sided Flycatcher

Contopus cooperi

STATUS	Threatened 	Threatened 
Threatened 	Threatened 	Threatened 



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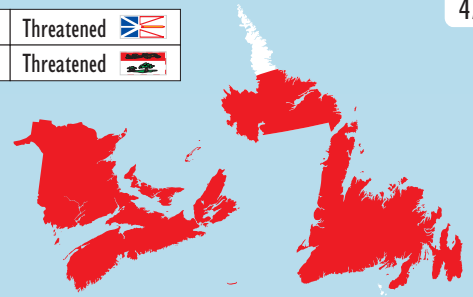
Species Description

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



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Found throughout most of Atlantic Canada, but in dwindling numbers. Winters in Central and South America.



Habitat

Olive-sided Flycatchers have a preference for coniferous forest edges and openings like meadows, rivers, bogs, swamps and ponds. They can also be found in disturbed areas such as early post-fire landscapes or clearcuts. They like to perch on the tops of tall trees or snags, from which they take off to catch flying insects.



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This species is found in openings along the forest edge, such as bogs and beaver ponds. Look for them at the tops of tall trees and snags near openings, and listen closely for their whistled song, "Quick, free beer!"

Interesting Points

- Males aggressively defend large territories around nesting sites - they sometimes knock squirrels or larger birds 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



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-wee”.

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



Note: Olive-sided Flycatchers may also be confused with Alder, Willow, and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, but these species are much smaller. The Great Crested Flycatcher is similar in size but has different colouration (a yellow belly), is uncommon in Atlantic Canada, and is found in deciduous or mixed-wood forests.

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Threats to Survival

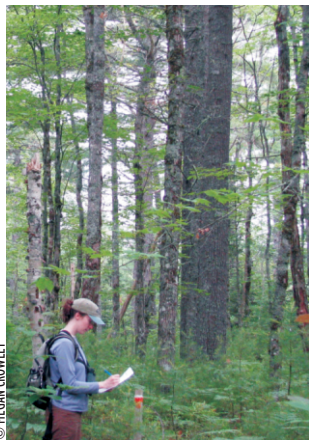
- Forestry practices (clearcutting and even-aged planting).
- Depletion of insect prey, which is likely linked to pesticide use.
- Loss of wintering ground habitat (a contributing factor to declines throughout its range).



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How You Can Help

Learn to recognize this species and report sightings to eBird. Participate in bird monitoring programs including the Breeding Bird Survey. Support sustainable forestry operations. Avoid using pesticides.



Listening for birds: point count survey

Contacts, Information, Sighting Reports & Stewardship Opportunities

Contact: Environment Canada (506) 364-5044 ext. 5060 or www.ec.gc.ca

Info: www.sararegistry.gc.ca

Sighting Reports: eBird.org

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