

## DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Acadian Flycatcher (Empidonax virescens) How many? 3Location? Croton Unit, Shimek Forest, 2½ miles west of Argyle, Lee County, IowaType of habitat? Streamside woods and thicketsWhen? date(s): May 3, 1985 time: 8:15 AM to 8:30 AMWho? your name and address: Robert I. Cecil 327 S. 6th, Keokuk, Iowa 52632others with you: ~~NO~~ Noothers before or after you: No

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

(I decided to document this early date due to the difficulty of separating Empidonax flycatchers)

I have been anticipating the possible early return of this species to Shimek Forest. This morning I heard a loud "pit-see!" (or, according to F.L.M., "Piz-za!") coming from a thick immature wooded area nearby a small permanent stream, a location where Acadians were common last year. The two notes were very close together, with no discernable break in between. The second note was higher in pitch, and sharply accented. The bird making the call remained hidden and I couldn't see it, although I was confident it was an Acadian. Perhaps 100 feet downstream, I spotted a small bird land on a bare branch perhaps 30 feet away. As I put my binoculars on it and identified it as an empidonax sp., it called out its sharply accented "pit-see!" This bird was directly over the stream. It flew to directly over my head and flitted about in a budding tree. Here I was able to observe the bird's typical empidonax features, including wing bars, eye ring, sparrow size, pale belly, very faint yellowish sides, and greenish-gray back. The third bird I heard singing (calling?) in the vicinity of the second.

These birds were not here on the 1st.

All of the birds sang repeatedly.

Similar species and how eliminated: Visually similar or identical to other empidonax. Others eliminated by voice (others do not give accented "pit-see!") Habitat perfect for Acadian, although this would not eliminate all others.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? N.A.

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:  
Viewing conditions excellent, sky clear, sun to back. Distance 25 to 50 ft., estimate.  
Binoculars 10x40 Zeiss.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Acadians common here last summer--had much experience. Little experience on other empidonax except Least.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

None

How long before field notes made? Not made this form completed? 30 minutes

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