

First Record of Fork-Tailed Flycatcher for North Carolina

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At 9:48 am on 1 June 1986 a Fork-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus savana*) was seen by me on a single strand of barbed wire forming a low fence to one side of the driveway at my home on Bluff Road, Cedar Point, Carteret County, N.C. Although I did not have binoculars with me at the time, the bird was readily identifiable, having a black crown and cheeks, a gray back, very light-almost white-underparts, black wings and a strikingly long, forked black tail. The forked tail was particularly noticeable as it hawked insects. Later, numerous studies of it were made with binoculars and a spotting scope at distances as close as approximately 10 meters. The bird appeared to be in good adult plumage, although there was evidence of wear in the tail feathers, the left fork being noticeably shorter than the right. The body seemed to be smaller than that of Eastern Kingbirds (*Tyrannus tyrannus*) that were also present in the area. This may have been exaggerated by the extremely long tail of the Fork-tailed Flycatcher.

It was not particularly shy, allowing very close approach if one did so without sudden movements. It seemed to completely ignore vehicular traffic. Preferred perches were the low strand of barbed wire and low trees (up to about 2 meters) from which it sought its prey. Insects were frequently caught on the ground, particularly at the margins of the marl road, where the insects were easily seen against the light background. This bird stayed in the immediate vicinity for a week and was last seen at 8:00 pm on 7 June 1986. During its stay it was seen and photographed by numerous individuals. To date this is the only record of this species for the state..

