

- New Mexico Ornithological Society
Bird Records Committee Submittal Form

- New Mexico Rare/Unusual Bird Report

1. Species: Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondi*)

2. Number: 1

3. Location: Along the west side of Caballo Reservoir near where Animas Creek empties into the lake, Sierra County.

4. Date: 12-26-2015

5. Time: 9:35-9:40 AM

6: Reporting observer:

David L. Hawksworth
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7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also identified the bird: none

8. Other observers who independently identified the bird: none

9. Light conditions: Completely overcast.

10. Optical equipment: 8X42 binoculars.

11. Distance to bird: Observations were made at distances from 5-15 yards.

12. Duration of observation: Observed for 3-4 minutes.

13. Habitat: Fairly dense riparian habitat with mainly salt cedars and willows.

14. Behavior: It was calling frequently while foraging in typical flycatcher fashion. It flew frequently from one location to another.

15. Description: This bird was readily recognizable as an *Empidonax* flycatcher on the basis of: flytcatcher shape and behavior; olive-gray upperparts; blackish wings with two bold wingbars; grayish head with white eyering and grayish chest contrasting with yellowish belly and undertail coverts. I identified it as a Hammond's by the small, narrow bill; long-winged/short-tailed appearance; constantly flicking its tail, often at the same time it flicked its wings; and its high pitched "peek!" call notes. I played tapes of Hammond's

and Dusky Flycatchers. It ignored the Dusky recordings, but reacted strongly to the Hammond's tape, by calling back and moving closer to me.

16. Voice: It was calling frequently with high-pitched “peek!” “peek!” call notes. Attached is recording I made of the calls – you may have to turn up the volume of your computer quite a lot to hear it. (And evidently I was holding my phone upside down!)

17. Similar species: The most likely other species I could have confused this bird with are other Empidonax flycatchers, particularly Gray and Dusky which are normally the only other species that might be in the area at this time of year. I eliminated both these species on the basis of the “peek!” call note, rather than the “whit” call notes of Gray and Dusky. In addition, this bird was clearly flicking its tail, not dipping its tail like a phoebe (or a Gray Flycatcher).

18. Photographs? None, but recording of calls made.

19. Previous experience with this species: I have observed this species many times.

20. Aids: Sibley Guide and the Audubon Smartphone app.

21. This description written from: Notes taken at observation.

22. Are you positive of your identification? Yes.

23. Signature, date & time report written:

/s/ Dave Hawksworth

12/28/15 7:00 PM