

# Olive-sided Flycatcher

*Contopus cooperi*

**STATUS**

Threatened 

Threatened 

43



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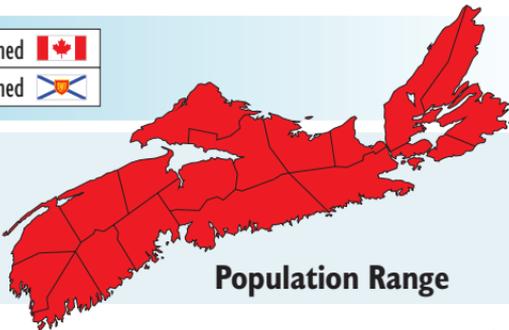
## Species Description

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 and lack obvious white bars. Both sexes and juveniles are similar in appearance.



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Found throughout Nova Scotia. Winters in Central and South America. Declined by 79% over the last 40 years in Canada.



**Population Range**

## Habitat

Has a preference for coniferous forest edges and openings like meadows, rivers, bogs, swamps and ponds. It can also be found in disturbed areas such as early post-fire landscapes. It likes to perch on the tops of tall trees or snags, from which it takes off to catch flying insects.



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Found from April to September in openings along the forest edge, such as bogs and beaver ponds. Look for it at the top 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 or larger birds out of trees to protect their eggs or chicks.
- They feed on flying insects like bees, flying ants and wasps.
- Their song sounds like “quick, free beer!”, and their call is a rapid “pip pip pip”.



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Returning to its perch after catching a flying insect

## Similar Species

### Eastern Wood-pewee (page 45) :

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



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### Least Flycatcher:

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



Olive-sided Flycatchers may also be confused with Alder 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 NS, and is found in deciduous or mixedwood forests.

## Threats to Survival

- Forestry practices (clearcutting and even-aged planting).
- Large-scale changes in flying insect prey (acid rain, climate change, pesticides).
- 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. Choose pesticide-free foods and keep your land chemical-free.



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Listening for birds: point count survey

## Contacts, Information, Sighting Reports & Stewardship Opportunities

**Contact:** Environment Canada (506) 364-5044 or [www.ec.gc.ca](http://www.ec.gc.ca)

**Info:** [www.sararegistry.gc.ca](http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca), [www.allaboutbirds.org](http://www.allaboutbirds.org), [www.mba-aom.ca](http://www.mba-aom.ca)

**Sighting Reports:** eBird.org, 1-866-727-3447, [www.speciesatrisk.ca/sightings](http://www.speciesatrisk.ca/sightings),

**Stewardship:** Bird Studies Canada 1-888-448-2473, [www.bsc-eoc.org](http://www.bsc-eoc.org)