

First Confirmed Breeding Record for Mountain Plover (*Charadrius montanus*) in Texas County, Oklahoma.—The Mountain Plover (*Charadrius montanus*), a shorebird endemic to the short-grass prairies of North America, is listed as a (1) Category 1 Species of Special Concern by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (<http://www.wildlifedepartment.com/endanger2.htm>), (2) species of High Overall Priority in the Pecos and Staked Plains Region (encompassing Cimarron County) by Partners in Flight (Carter et al. 2000; Panjabi 2001), and (3) Highly Imperiled Species by the United States Fish and Wildlife's U. S. Shorebird Conservation Plan (U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan 2004). It occupies the extreme eastern edge of its breeding range in the Oklahoma Panhandle (Knopf 1996). Nesting records have been confined historically to Cimarron County (Tate 1923; Sutton 1967; Baumgartner and Baumgartner 1992; Reinking 2004). The only Oklahoma nesting record outside of Cimarron County is an 1860 observation from C. S. McCarthy (quoted in Nice 1931) of a nest "west of Fort Cobb" in Caddo County; however, this description is too vague to determine in what county it occurred.

In May–July 2004, JS and SM searched Cimarron and western Texas counties for Mountain Plovers and Long-billed Curlews (*Numenius americanus*) as part of a project designed to assess their distribution and relative abundance. On 24 June, while driving section roads a few kilometers southeast of Elkhart, Kansas, in northwestern Texas County, SM found a pair of Mountain Plovers with 2 chicks. Roughly 1.5 km west of that location, SM discovered a Mountain Plover sitting on a nest with 3 eggs, and at a third location 0.8 km west found another adult with 2 chicks. A few other nearby locations were searched, but heat waves impeded viewing conditions. On the morning of 25 June, SM returned to the area and found an additional pair with 3 chicks and an adult with 2 chicks. The 5 breeding locations (assuming no double-counting over the 2 days; locations and numbers of young indicate at least 4 pairs) were in 4 adjoining sections, and all were on bare areas of agricultural fields. Two flyby birds were seen by JS near Guymon on 1 July 2004 but were not found on 2 subsequent days and were probably premigratory wanderers.

Conditions in western Texas County were similar to areas of Cimarron County where Mountain Plovers are rare, but regular, breeders: numerous pivot-irrigated fields with large, bare, plowed areas around the edges. Three of the family groups and the single nest found were in the plowed area surrounding pivot-irrigated crops; the fourth family group was in a large, plowed, rectangular area at the southeastern corner of a section. All had crop cover (corn, wheat) immediately adjacent in which to escape midday heat (Graul 1975; Shackford 1996). These bare areas in agricultural fields are of growing interest relative to conservation of the Mountain Plover (Shackford et al. 1999).

These are the first confirmed breeding events for Mountain Plovers in Texas County, and they extend the bird's breeding range in Oklahoma approximately 25 km farther east than previously recorded. It seems possible that Mountain Plovers have bred here previously (Reinking 2004) and their discovery was due to the project's special effort into this understudied area of the state. Additional documentation of breeding activity in Oklahoma, particularly in non-traditional breeding habitats, will be important to ongoing conservation and recovery of the Mountain Plover.

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First record for the Gray Flycatcher in Oklahoma.—We observed a Gray Flycatcher (*Empidonax wrightii*) on 20 May 2003 on private ranch-land in Cimarron County, 10 km NE of Kenton, Oklahoma. We were able to observe this bird for 5 min from 1115 h at a distance of 15 m using 8.5 × 42 Swarovski and 10 × 40 Zeiss binoculars. Light conditions were excellent with the bird sunlit to our north as it was flycatching from a blooming grape vine (*Vitis sp.*), and perching about 5 m above the ground much of the time. The flycatcher was slim and displayed regular and obvious tail pumping, the tail rising quickly and descending slowly. It was very pale gray overall with a very pale-yellowish belly and had short primary projections and long tail. It had a faint eye ring and white wing bars, and its bill was light yellow on bottom and black on top. No call was heard.

The species most similar to the Gray Flycatcher is the Dusky Flycatcher (*Empidonax oberholseri*). This similarity led to early taxonomic confusion because the type specimen for the Dusky Flycatcher was actually a Gray Flycatcher, the error discovered in 1939 by Allan R. Phillips. Phillips also provided a major breakthrough in identification that made the Gray Flycatcher perhaps the easiest species of *Empidonax* flycatcher to identify in the field when he described its habit of wagging its tail in a gentle downward movement, similar to a slowed-down tail wag of an Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*) rather than flicking the tail up and then down as performed by other *Empidonax* [Phillips, A. R. 1944, Gray Flycatcher (*Empidonax wrightii*). In *The Birds of North America*, No. 458 (A Poole and F. Gill, eds.). The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, and the American Ornithologists' Union, Washington, D.C.].

The range of the Gray Flycatcher extends to every state W of Oklahoma, and the nearest boundary of its known range is about 1500 km W of Oklahoma in New Mexico. The flycatcher we observed was about 1525 km E of its known range. No expansion has been reported in the northeastern part of its range. The area in which we observed the Gray Flycatcher was arid high plains with