

LBRC Report Form

1. English and Scientific names: Fork-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus savana*)
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):
1
3. Parish:
Iberia
4. Specific Locality:
Conn Property (private), 29.89136, -91.76188
5. Date(s) when observed: 4 October 2025
6. Time(s) of day when observed: 8:14am
7. Reporting observer: Erik I. Johnson
8. Other observers accompanying reporter who also identified the bird(s):
none
9. Other observers who independently identified the bird(s):
none
10. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): Sunny and clear. Bird initially flew over pretty close to overhead, from roughly N to S, creating contrasting shadows under the wings. A few minutes later it returned, flying S to N, this time a little between me and the sun to the east-southeast, so backlighting was a little harsher.
11. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Nikon D7200, Sigma 150-600 mm f/4.5-6.3 lens. Vortex Razor 10x42 ED. All in good condition.
12. Distance to bird(s): Initially about 100 ft and on return about 200 ft.
13. Duration of observation: About 5 seconds heading S and about 5-10 seconds heading N.
14. Habitat: Restored deciduous lowland scrub and forest. Bird never touched down and was only seen flying over.

15. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): Flying. See #16 for more.

16. Description (include only what was actually seen, not what "should" have been seen; include if possible: total length/relative size compared to other familiar species, body bulk, shape, proportions, bill, eye, leg, and plumage characteristics. Stress features that separate it from similar species):

It flew almost directly over, just above treetops, heading south. I wasn't seeing any peach (for Scissor-tailed Flycatcher), but the light was harsh, so I tried a couple shots and just couldn't focus fast enough. Gone. Tail looked extremely long. Very quick look and I was trying to convince myself that I didn't get a good look at a STFL. But then, remarkably, it came back north, and I got a few pics, confirming as Fork-tailed. The pictures show the notches in the outer primaries.

17. Voice: Silent (not heard)

18. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation):

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher lacks the strong black face patch and would have more peach tones along flanks. This bird was essentially black(ish) and white (ish). Eastern Kingbird wouldn't have this kind of long forked tail. I even refreshed myself and looked up Pin-tailed Whydah, but black bill and notched outer primaries (among a few other plumage features) rule this out.

19. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?):

Yes, 3 photos included.

20. Previous experience with this species: I have seen once prior in Louisiana (the ratty Grand Isle bird in April 2013) and my last sightings of the species were in Nov 2014 (SE Brazil) and Sep 2013 (Panama), so it's been a while! Most of my experience with this species involved periodic sightings in and around the Manaus, Brazil area in 2007-2010. I get lots of regular exposure to Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in Louisiana and along Gulf Coast.

21. Identification aids: (list books, illustrations, other birders, etc. used in identification):

Cornell's Birds of the World immediately after observation to check against Pin-tailed Whydah.

22. Identification aids used when?

At time of sighting

23. Are you positive of your identification? If not, explain:

Yes.

24. Date report completed:

6 October 2025

25. May the LBRC have permission to display in whole or in part this report and accompanying photos on the LOS-LBRC website and LBRC Facebook page?

Yes

26. If yes, may we include your name with the report?

Yes

