

tree row of small 25-to-40-foot trees across the flooded, bottomland field to the northeast from the 80-to-90-foot tall pecan. Elsewhere, as far as the eye could see to the east, north, and south were corn and soybean stubble fields, limiting the possibilities for other nest locations.

The male sallied out after insects for a while; then the female suddenly appeared. She soon flew far out into the overgrown, flooded, and idle agricultural field to the south, followed by the male. She appeared to catch a few insects, then followed by the male, flew clear to the end of the field, about 100 to 150 yards away. Only one small eight-to-nine-foot tree sapling stood there, and I thought I had my nest tree. As most nests of this species are fairly low, including the few I had seen in Texas and Oklahoma, I approached the small tree with some excitement. However, to my surprise, the tree was empty, with no flycatchers and no nest in sight.

It was on the back side of the lone pecan that I again found the male near the top of the tree. Walking around the opposite side of the tree for a better look, I noticed a fairly large, ball-like mass less than six feet from the male. The relatively long tail feathers of the female bird sticking out from over the edge of the nest cup quickly confirmed the flycatcher nest, less than 30 minutes after beginning my search.

As Regosin (1998) relates the "nest is typically found in an isolated tree or shrub", and this situation was definitely an "isolated" tree. The nest was approximately 60-to-70 feet high in the large pecan, and appeared to be a loosely constructed "ball" of material with lots of "cottony-like" material intermixed with loosely held together sticks and other fibrous plant materials. The area immediately around the nest was apparently an agricultural field, which had been left to sit idle, likely due to the fact that much of it had one-to-four inches or more of water standing in it, with various tall forbs and grasses beginning to grow up out of the water. Smartweed (*Polygonum sp.*), sedge (*Cyperaceae*) and foxtail (*Setaria sp.*) were common in and near the wet areas, while taller vegetation, mostly in the form of Johnsongrass (*Sorghum halepense*), Japanese brome (*Bromus japonicus*), aster (*Aster sp.*), and a low, dense growth of trumpet creeper (*Campsis radicans*) grew taller in the dryer areas toward the dike.

The flycatchers seemed to be doing much of their foraging from the tall weed stalks in this field. The male also foraged along a small utility line just east of the field, and flew out, sometimes to the ground in a barren, soybean-stubble field, and on at least a couple of occasions swallowed grasshoppers (*Orthoptera*

*sp.*), and on one occasion a large beetle (*Coleoptera sp.*). Grasshoppers, crickets (*Orthoptera sp.*), and beetles are apparently the main prey of this species (Regosin 1998). The male also snapped at small flies (*Diptera sp.*) around his head while perched.

Over the course of a few more hours of observation of the nesting pair on 30 May, and 1, 5, and 8 June, it became apparent the male had a favorite perch near the nest where it liked to sit, on a dead limb. The male went to the edge of the nest on at least two occasions, once while the female was absent, but he did not sit on the nest. The female incubated during much of the time the nest was observed, although at one point, while off the nest, she briefly chased a male Blue Grosbeak (*Guiraca caerulea*) who could often be heard singing in the area. The male also chased a Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*) across the dike to the west, one of the only times either flycatcher was seen on that side of the dike. The male also gave chase to a crow, either an American (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) or Fish it was not clear, as both were commonly seen and heard in the immediate area of the nest tree.

The flycatcher gave an extended flight, both at some height and for some distance away from the nesting area, across the large agricultural field to the east. It reminded me of the way Eastern Kingbirds (*Tyrannus tyrannus*) chase various bird species, especially raptors, for some distance.

Other birds noted in the immediate area of the nest tree included over 50 Little Blue Herons (*Egretta tricolor*) foraging in the nearby flooded field, Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*), American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), Northern Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*), Eastern Kingbird, Warbling Vireo (*Vireo gilvus*), Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*), Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*), Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*), Field Sparrow (*Spizella pusilla*), Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*) (male often sang from pecan), Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*), Orchard Oriole (*Icterus spurius*) (two pairs), Baltimore Oriole (*Icterus galbula*), and American Goldfinch (*Carduelis tristis*). One pair of Orchard Orioles had an active nest low on the opposite side of the pecan at the same time as the flycatcher was active. A pair of Least Terns (*Sterna antillarum*) were also noted just across the dike to the west and south, on an exposed mud flat at the edge of the floodwaters. Unfortunately, my schedule did not permit me to return to the flycatcher's nesting area again until early August, whereupon no flycatchers were noted.

Again, having thought that I finally had found a first state nest record, about a week after my find,