

Anna in Union County (Fawks 1970). Todd Fink discovered an immature on 5 September 1982 near Belleville in St. Clair County; it remained to 9 September (Bodman 1982). Considering this report of an immature, observations of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers near Belleville during the next two consecutive fall seasons of 1983 and 1984 represent potential nesting activity. Leonard Stanley reported an immature Scissor-tailed Flycatcher near Rend Lake in Franklin County on 2 September 2001; it was seen at this location until at least 23 September 2001 (Chapel 2002). Another immature was observed by Frank Bennett on 2 July 2002 near the town of Joppa in Massac County (Kleen 2003). A family group (unknown number of immatures) was also noted by the landowner near the nest site on the Jackson/Union County line in 2004 (pers. comm. - E. Walters). Immatures have been recorded in close proximity to Carlyle Lake in Clinton County on several dates: Brink Road on 19 August 2000, Brink Road from 12 August through 25 August 2001, and Coles Creek Road from 2 September through 9 September 2001. Noting the presence of immature birds in 2000 and 2001, as well as the presence of a pair in 2002, these records near Carlyle Lake become of special interest because they present an apparent case of breeding range expansion to the northeast along the Kaskaskia River watershed.

Most of the records above display the propensity of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers to return to certain sites each year. Marked site fidelity has not only been observed in Illinois but also during banding studies within their core range in southwestern Oklahoma. A study of Scissor-tailed Flycatcher breeding biology conducted by Jonathan Regosin and Stephen Pruett-Jones of the University of Chicago presented some interesting findings concerning the extent of site fidelity that is observed in some Scissor-tailed Flycatchers. From mid-March through mid-August of 1991 and 1992, Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were banded within a study area in southwestern Oklahoma and their breeding biology was monitored and



Top: Scissor-tailed Flycatcher sitting in nest. 19 June 2004. Union County.

Bottom: Scissor-tailed Flycatcher near nest. 19 June 2004. Union County. Photos by Travis A. Mahan.

compared between the two years (Regosin and Pruett-Jones 1995). Of the 15 banded females that returned to the study area in 1992, six (40.0%) nested in the same tree used in 1991, five (33.3%) nested within 100 meters of the 1991 nest site, and only four (26.7%) nested farther than 100 meters away from their 1991 nest site (Regosin and Pruett-Jones 1995). Also of interest, none of the 110 nestlings that they banded in 1991 were found within the study area in 1992 (Regosin and Pruett-Jones 1995). With these facts in mind, the likelihood that Scissor-tailed Flycatchers successfully nested in Clinton County is very high. This statement could also be made for the St. Clair County birds during the early 1980s.

Accounts

Jackson County - 2003

On 5 July 2003, H. David Bohlen, Myrna Deaton, Dan Kassebaum and I were scouring a large portion of southern Illinois in search of regional

specialty species such as Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*), Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*), Purple Gallinule (*Porphyrio martinica*), Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*), and Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*). While driving north along Route 3 about three miles south of Grand Tower in southern Jackson County, Dan spotted a pale bird perched on a utility wire that was approximately 100 yards to the west of the road. We knew that a pair of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers had been seen nearby during the 2003 Spring Bird Count, so we thought this bird was a likely candidate for one of the flycatchers. Myrna made a speedy turnabout putting us in the south-bound lane of this busy road. Closer inspection clinched the identification as a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, but the sex was unclear at the time. The bird soon flew off into some nearby vegetation, but when it flew out I noted that this bird had a longer tail. At that time, we realized that we were seeing a male and that we must have originally observed a female. Both birds would eventually come into sight as they perched in nearby trees and on the utility wires that ran parallel to Route 3. The pair was actively feeding in acrobatic forays from their perches. After one such foray, the female was observed to feed another Scissor-tail - a juvenile! As expected, the juvenile bird possessed a shorter tail than the adult female and had more prominent pale edging to the flight feathers than those of the adults. A yellowish wash to the flanks and perhaps the belly was also noted. We observed the female feed this begging young bird at least three times with one of the prey items appearing to be a dragonfly (*Odonata sp.*). The family group remained close to an isolated grove of three large sycamores (*Platanus occidentalis*) that had other medium-sized trees and shrubs growing near the base of the cluster. Two of the sycamores had sparse canopies while one had leaves of a typical density. The sycamores were present along the eastern shore of the Tower Island Chute with a strip of agricultural land positioned between the cluster of trees and Route 3. It was thought that the nest tree was within this group of sycamores.