

# Alder Flycatcher

*Empidonax alnorum*

## General Information:

-Perhaps the most green-brown of the eastern birds in its genus, this bird was formerly known as Traill's Flycatcher, from which both it and the Willow Flycatcher were split into separate species in the 1970s. This shy bird is easily overlooked; during nesting season it stays hidden with the thick trees and shrubs of its alder swamp and wet meadow-thicket habitat. Occasionally it can be spotted dashing out of hiding to catch passing insects or perching conspicuously on an exposed branch to sing.

## Song:

-A raspy *fee-bee-o* or *way-bee-o* on breeding grounds. Also calls *pep*.

## Behavior:

-The male sings repeatedly for the first 2 weeks after returning to its territory in the late spring, but after he bonds with a female is largely silent. Stays low in thick vegetation, often hunting inside umbrella of thicket canopy. Perches in shrubs to spot prey, then catches it on the fly. It eats a wide variety of flying insect; gleans some from vegetation, including spiders and millipedes. Also feeds on some types of small berries.



## Breeding:

-Monogamous.

## Nesting:

-Incubation 12-14 days by female. The 1 brood of altricial young are fed by both sexes and have their first flight at 13-14 days,

## Population:

-Common and considered stable.

## Conservation:

-Neo-tropical migrant. Occasionally has its nest parasitized by the Brown-headed Cowbird.

## Shoreline Restoration Issues:

-If you would like to create an environment friendly for the Alder Flycatcher on your shoreland property plant plenty of shrubs within the 50-foot buffer zone. Some shrubs to consider are Tag Alder, Ninebark, Nannyberry, June-berry, High-bush Cranberry, Pussy Willow, Sandbar Willow, Hawthorn, and American and Beaked Hazelnut. The planting of emergent and submersed aquatic vegetation is also encouraged.