



Birds

# Olive-sided Flycatcher

*Contopus cooperi*

Priority 2 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)

Class: Birds (*Aves*)

Order: Perching Birds (*Passeriformes*)

Family: Flycatchers (*Tyrannidae*)

## General comments:

The Olive-sided Flycatcher is a stocky flycatcher with a bold white chest and dark flanks, giving it a vested appearance. In Maine, it breeds primarily in high-elevation spruce-fir forests, bogs, and other conifer-dominated habitats with open canopy gaps and snags. This long-distance migrant is declining across its range, but the specific causes remain poorly understood. Research is needed to clarify the impacts of habitat changes on both breeding and wintering grounds, insect prey availability, and forest management practices.

## Species Conservation Range Maps:

Town Map: [Contopus cooperi\\_Towns.pdf](#)

Subwatershed Map: [Contopus cooperi\\_HUC12.pdf](#)

## SGCN Priority Ranking - Designation Criteria:

<b>State Special Concern:</b>	Olive-sided Flycatcher is listed as a species of Special Concern in Maine.
<b>High Regional Conservation Priority:</b>	<p><b>Partners In Flight:</b> Regional Concern: Yes, Regional Stewardship: , Regional Importance: Yes, Continental Importance: Yes</p> <p><b>United States Birds of Conservation Concern:</b> Bird of Conservation Concern in Bird Conservation Regions 14 and/or 30: Yes</p>

## Habitat Associations:

**Formation:** Boreal Wetland Forest

**Macrogroup:** North American Boreal Conifer Poor Swamp

**Habitat System:** Eastern Boreal-Sub-boreal Conifer Acidic Swamp and Treed Poor Fen

**Formation:** Freshwater Marsh

**Macrogroup:** Eastern North American Marsh, Wet Meadow & Shrubland

**Habitat System:** Laurentian-Acadian Wet Meadow-Shrub Swamp

**Formation:** Northeastern Upland Forest

**Macrogroup:** Acadian-Northern Appalachian Forest

**Habitat System:** Acadian Low Elevation Spruce-Fir-Hardwood Forest  
*especially regenerating stands*

**Habitat System:** Acadian Sub-boreal Spruce Flat  
*especially regenerating stands*



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**Formation: Northeastern Upland Forest**

	<b>Habitat System:</b> Acadian-Appalachian Montane Spruce-Fir Forest <i>especially regenerating stands</i>
	<b>Habitat System:</b> Laurentian-Acadian Sub-boreal Dry-Mesic Pine-Black Spruce-Hardwood Forest <i>especially regenerating stands</i>

**Macrogroup: Plantation and Ruderal Forest**

	<b>Habitat System:</b> Managed Tree Plantation <i>If conifer</i>
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**Formation: Northeastern Wetland Forest**

**Macrogroup: Laurentian-Acadian Flooded & Swamp Forest**

	<b>Habitat System:</b> Acadian-Northern Appalachian Conifer Seepage Forest <i>especially regenerating stands</i>
	<b>Habitat System:</b> Laurentian-Acadian Alkaline Conifer-Hardwood Swamp <i>especially regenerating stands</i>
	<b>Habitat System:</b> Northern Appalachian-Acadian Conifer-Hardwood Acidic Swamp <i>especially regenerating stands</i>

**Formation: Peatland**

**Macrogroup: North American Boreal & Subboreal Alkaline Fen**

	<b>Habitat System:</b> Laurentian-Acadian Alkaline Fen <i>needs scattered trees and snags</i>
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**Macrogroup: North American Boreal & Subboreal Bog & Acidic Fen**

	<b>Habitat System:</b> Acadian Maritime Bog <i>needs scattered trees</i>
	<b>Habitat System:</b> Eastern Boreal-Sub-Boreal Acidic Basin Fen <i>needs scattered trees</i>
	<b>Habitat System:</b> Eastern Boreal-Sub-Boreal Bog <i>needs scattered trees</i>
	<b>Habitat System:</b> North-Central Interior and Appalachian Acidic Peatland <i>needs scattered trees</i>

**Threats**

Threat Priority Level based on Severity and Actionability		Moderate Severity	High Severity
	Highly Actionable	Medium-High	High
	Moderately Actionable	Medium	Medium-High
	Actionable with Difficulty	Low	Low



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**IUCN Level 1 Threat    Biological Resource Use**

**IUCN Level 2 Threat: Logging and Wood Harvesting**

<b>Severity:</b> Moderate Severity	<b>Actionability:</b> Moderately Actionable
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**Notes:** Some harvested forests attract Olive-sided Flycatchers but may not provide sufficient resources or safe nesting conditions, potentially reducing reproductive success. Research needed.

**IUCN Level 1 Threat    Other Options**

**IUCN Level 2 Threat: Lack of knowledge**

<b>Severity:</b> Moderate Severity	<b>Actionability:</b> Moderately Actionable
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**Notes:** Drivers of declines remain poorly understood. Little is known about how landscape features, prey availability, or forest structure influence nesting success in the Northeast. Additionally, wintering ground threats (such as deforestation in the Andes) remain unquantified for Maine-origin birds. Until full annual cycle studies are conducted, including productivity monitoring and migratory connectivity, effective conservation strategies will be limited.

**IUCN Level 1 Threat    Climate Change and Severe Weather**

**IUCN Level 2 Threat: Habitat Shifting or Alteration**

<b>Severity:</b> Moderate Severity	<b>Actionability:</b> Actionable with Difficulty
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**Notes:** Climate change may alter boreal and montane forest composition and phenology, potentially reducing the availability habitat during the breeding season.

**IUCN Level 1 Threat    Natural Systems Modifications**

**IUCN Level 2 Threat: Fire and Fire Suppression**

<b>Severity:</b> Moderate Severity	<b>Actionability:</b> Actionable with Difficulty
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**Notes:** Suppression of natural disturbance regimes (particularly wildfire), reducing early-successional and postfire habitats critical for breeding.



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#### IUCN Level 1 Threat    Other Options

##### IUCN Level 2 Threat: Other Threat

**Severity:**    Moderate Severity

**Actionability:**    Actionable with Difficulty

**Notes:**    As an aerial insectivore, the species may be negatively affected by pesticide use and broader declines in insect populations.

#### Species Level Conservation Actions:

None. Only species specific conservation actions that address high (red) or medium-high (orange) priority threats are summarized here.

#### Conservation Actions Associated with the Boreal Conifer birds Guild:

Conservation Action	Category	Biological Priority	Type
Manage for a mature white pine component including those that extend beyond the canopy.	Habitat Management	moderate	on-going

##### Threat(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action

- Logging and Wood Harvesting
- Wood and Pulp Plantations

Conservation Action	Category	Biological Priority	Type
Conserve large, contiguous tracts of mature spruce-fir and black spruce forest across Maine's boreal region.	Habitat Management	critical	on-going

##### Threat(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action

- Logging and Wood Harvesting
- Habitat Shifting or Alteration

Conservation Action	Category	Biological Priority	Type
Promote forest management practices that maintain or restore mature conifer forest structure, including vertical diversity and intact canopy cover.	Habitat Management	high	new

##### Threat(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action

- Logging and Wood Harvesting
- Habitat Shifting or Alteration



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Conservation Action	Category	Biological Priority	Type
Minimize large-scale salvage and preemptive harvesting during forest pest outbreaks to preserve long-term forest integrity. Promote pest outbreak response strategies that maintain mature forest structure (older trees, snags and downed wood, structural diversity).	Habitat Management	moderate	new

**Threat(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action**

- Problematic Native Species-Diseases

Conservation Action	Category	Biological Priority	Type
Identify and protect climate refugia and elevational/latitudinal habitat gradients critical to boreal species persistence under changing conditions.	Research	high	new

**Threat(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action**

- Habitat Shifting or Alteration

Conservation Action	Category	Biological Priority	Type
Increase coordinated monitoring efforts across seasons and regions to better track population trends and distribution shifts in boreal bird communities.	Survey and Monitoring	high	new

**Threat(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action**

- Lack of knowledge

Conservation Action	Category	Biological Priority	Type
Incorporate innovative monitoring approaches (e.g., ARUs, remote sensing) to improve detection of low-density or cryptic species across remote boreal landscapes.	Survey and Monitoring	high	new

**Threat(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action**

- Lack of knowledge

Conservation Action	Category	Biological Priority	Type
Coordinate across public and private landowners to maintain landscape-scale connectivity of mature boreal forest habitats.	Public Outreach	high	new

**Threat(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action**

- Other Ecosystem Modifications



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Conservation Action	Category	Biological Priority	Type
Monitor bird community responses to spruce budworm treatment and integrate bird impact assessments into outbreak response planning. Expand research and monitoring efforts to understand short- and long-term effects of insecticide use (including newer agents like tebufenozide) on boreal bird populations, especially for spruce budworm specialists.	Survey and Monitoring	high	new

**Threat(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action**

- Agricultural and Forestry Effluents
- Problematic Native Species-Diseases

**Broad Taxonomic Group Conservation Actions:**

Additional relevant conservation actions for this species are assigned within broader taxonomic groups in Maine's Wildlife Action Plan: Element 4.

**Habitat Based Conservation Actions:**

Additional conservation actions that may benefit habitat(s) associated with this species can be found in Maine's Wildlife Action Plan: Element 4. Click on the Habitat Grouping of interest to launch a habitat based report summarizing relevant conservation actions and associated SGCN.

*The Wildlife Action Plan was developed through a lengthy participatory process with state agencies, targeted conservation partners, and the general public. The Plan is non-regulatory. The species, threats, and voluntary conservation actions identified in the Plan complement, but do not replace, existing work*