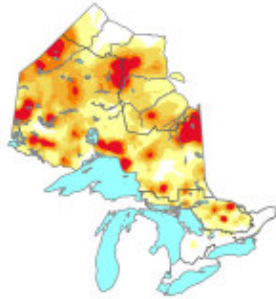


# Olive-sided Flycatcher Factsheet

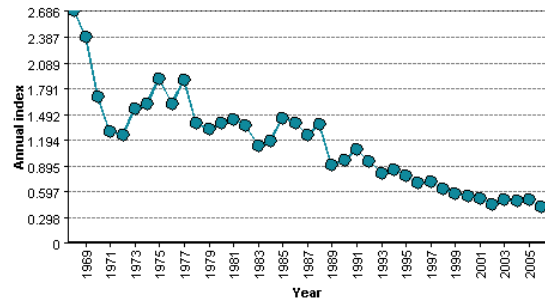
## Boreal Bird Toolkit



Olive-sided Flycatcher



Relative Abundance



Breeding Bird Survey Index Trend 1968-2006 (Canada)

**Description and biology:** The Olive-sided Flycatcher is a large (20cm), conspicuous flycatcher usually found sitting near the top of a tree or on a dead branch. It can be recognized by the dark patches on its sides which contrast with its white breast and belly. This olive-grey flycatcher has distinctive white tufts above the rump, although these are not always visible. It feeds exclusively on flying insects.

**Habitat requirements:** The Olive-sided Flycatcher prefers forest edges and openings such as those associated with streams, ponds, muskeg, bogs, burnt forest, or clear-cuts. These habitats have exposed perch sites with unobstructed views that make it easier for this flycatcher to spot flying insects.

**Natural history:** The song of the Olive-sided Flycatcher can be characterized as a whistled “quick, THREE BEERS!” This species will often “whack” its prey against a branch to kill it, and possibly to remove stingers from bees.

**Conservation status:** Of the North American and world population, an estimated 38% breed in Canada’s boreal forest. Breeding Bird Surveys reveal that the Olive-sided Flycatcher declined significantly by 4.0% per year between 1968 and 2006 across Canada, and by 9.5% per year in Ontario. COSEWIC assigned a “threatened” status in November 2007, based in part upon a 79% population decline since 1968. Results from the second Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas (2001-2005) show the species declined by a significant 35% in the Southern Shield over twenty years, and by 11% in the Northern Shield (nonsignificant statistically). Partners in Flight identifies the Olive-sided Flycatcher as a watch list species, and designates it as a species of both continental and regional concern.

**Environmental threats:** Factors for population decline are poorly understood. In the boreal forest, logged areas may superficially resemble suitable natural habitats such as post-fire areas but might function differently, negatively affecting Olive-sided Flycatchers that nest in clearcuts. On the wintering grounds, deforestation and habitat alteration in the montane forests and foothills of the Andes are likely a significant problem. Effects of climate change and pesticides on insect populations are possible factors.

**Conservation opportunities:** Conservation strategies are difficult to recommend since reasons for declines are poorly understood. Expansion of commercial logging and fire suppression into the northern boreal forest would be detrimental should these practices be significant factors. Maintenance of expansive areas of suitable habitat, including wetlands and burns, in the boreal forest and taiga is recommended. International efforts are required to address habitat loss in wintering areas, pesticides, and climate change.

### Boreal Bird Toolkit:

Toolkit and factsheet: © Wildlife Conservation Society Canada and G.G. Beck Ecological Consulting 2008

Breeding Bird Survey: courtesy Canadian Wildlife Service, volunteers & coordinators; [www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/mgbc/trends](http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/mgbc/trends)

Abundance map and point count data: courtesy *Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Ontario, 2001-2005*; [www.birdsontario.org](http://www.birdsontario.org)

Photo: © Jeff Nadler. See toolkit for literature cited.