

*The Eastern Kingbird is a common breeder and migrant in the Hudson River Valley.*

### **Conservation Status**

The Eastern Kingbird is not listed as Endangered or Threatened by New York and is not found on the Audubon WatchList. Partners in Flight lists it as a Species of Regional Concern in Bird Conservation Regions 13 and 30. Breeding Bird Survey results for New York State reflect a moderate decline over the last four decades. NYS Breeding Bird Atlas data show a slight decline in distribution in the Hudson River Valley.



### **Identification**

This tyrant flycatcher is fairly large, about the size of a cardinal. It is easily identified, with contrasting black upperparts and white underparts, and a white band on the tip of the tail. The sexes look alike.

### **Habitat**

This species breeds in generally open country, such as fields with scattered trees and shrubs, along woodland edges, in orchards, along wetland edges in trees that overhang the water, and in dead snags that are surrounded by water. Commonly used trees include hawthorn, apple, elm, mulberry, Norway spruce, willow, maple, locust, ironwood, white cedar, and sycamore.

### **Nesting**

The nest is placed on a horizontal limb of a tree, in a low shrub at water's edge, or on a stump or snag in water at an average height of 10-20'. It is built by both sexes and is a large, deep cup made from twigs, weed stems, straw, plant down, and other plant materials.

### **Food**

The Eastern Kingbird is a "sit-and-wait" predator that takes short flights from a perch to capture prey, usually flying insects, which are swallowed whole.

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**Threats**

- Loss of habitat due to suburban development.
- Loss of shrubland habitat due to forest succession.
- Overuse of pesticides as a possible source of egg and hatchling mortality.
- Collisions with motor vehicles due to frequent nesting and foraging near roads.

**Management Recommendations**

No known management program for Eastern Kingbird.

**This management summary is adapted from Murphy 1996 and NatureServe 2009.**

**For additional information, see the following references:**

Blancher, P. J. and R. J. Robertson. 1985. A comparison of Eastern Kingbird breeding biology in lakeshore and upland habitats. *Canadian Journal of Zoology*. 63:2305–2312.

Murphy, M. T. 2001. Source-sink dynamics of a declining Eastern Kingbird population and the value of sink habitats. *Conservation Biology* 15:737-748. (Delaware County)

Murphy, M. T. 2001. Habitat-specific demography of a long-distance, neotropical migrant, bird, the Eastern Kingbird. *Ecology* 82:1304-1318. (Delaware County)

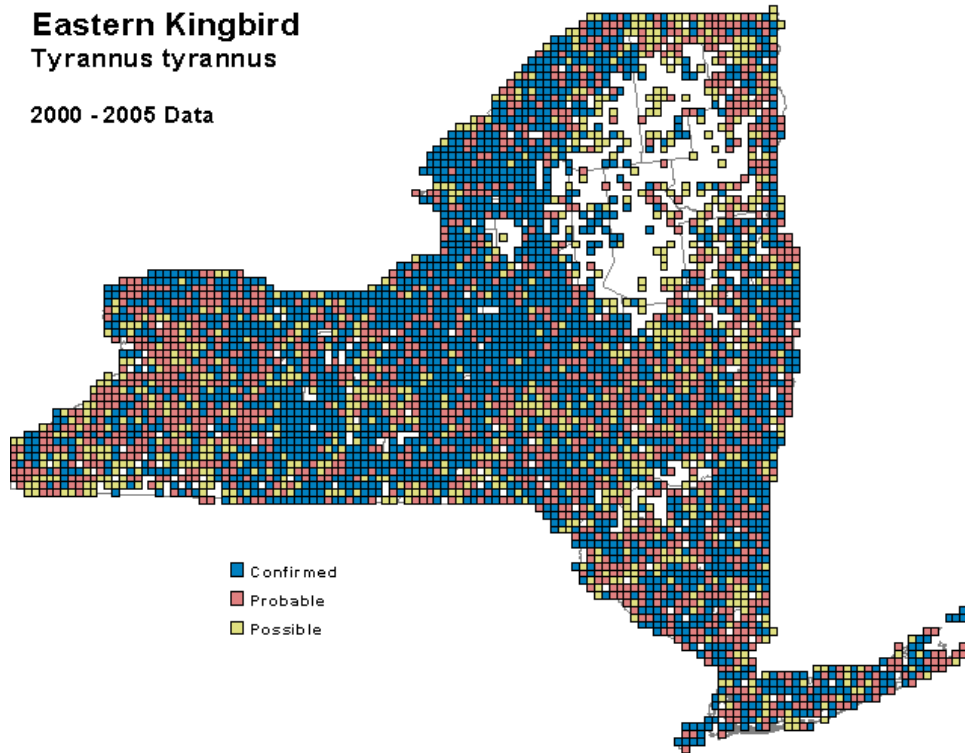
Murphy, Michael T. 1996. Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*), The Birds of North America Online (A. Poole, Ed.). Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology; Retrieved from the Birds of North America Online: <http://bna.birds.cornell.edu.bnaproxy.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/253>

NatureServe. 2009. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 7.1. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. (Accessed: May 23, 2009 ).

## NYS BREEDING BIRD ATLAS COMPARATIVE DATA

### Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus*

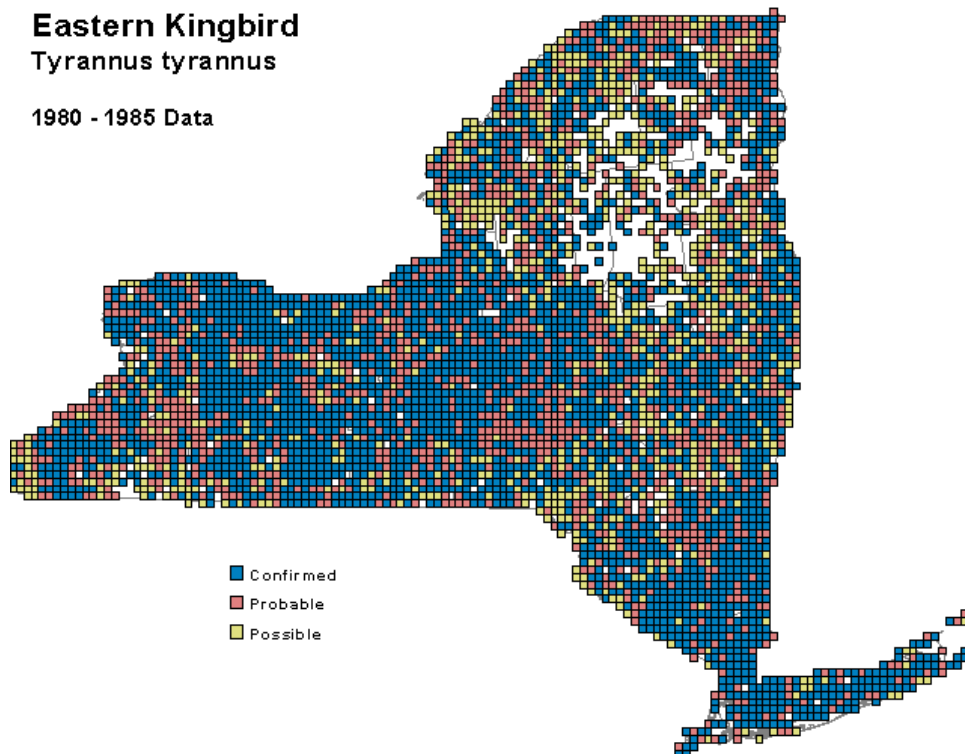
2000 - 2005 Data



- Confirmed
- Probable
- Possible

### Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus*

1980 - 1985 Data



- Confirmed
- Probable
- Possible