

The Rare Cattle Tyrant

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On November 12, 2023, bird enthusiasts and wildlife officials were saying that the first rare and recorded sighting of a Cattle Tyrant in the United States was reported in Corpus Christi, Texas. Birders posted pictures of the bird on rooftops, ledges and sidewalks, and a particular dumpster of which it seems to be fond.

My campus had early dismissal on Friday, November 17, so I knew I had to take a chance and go find this rare bird before it was gone. So, my bird buddy and I drove from Brownsville to Corpus to try our luck. The last report stated it was seen at Dokyo Restaurant in a palm tree. When we arrived at the restaurant, there were no birders around, much less any birds. I approached a man throwing the trash out and asked him if he knew anything about a rare bird. He quickly said, oh yes, it's out in front of this building in a palm tree. As I approached the palm tree, a lady from a car passing by shouted out, "Are you looking for the bird? It's in that palm tree next to you!" Another friendly lady came around the corner and said, "The bird is in that palm tree."



Cattle Tyrant (*Machetornis rixosa*) seen in Corpus Christi, TX



Well sure enough, as I looked up there it was! It was eating from berries that were full of flies in the tree! What a cute looking bird! It was canary yellow with a gray head-that had a scarlet patch hidden away. It could care less that we were pointing our cameras at it and taking pics, he was enjoying a feast of flies!

This rare bird from South America has birders coming from all over the U.S. to see it. Some people are saying he was a stowaway on ship coming to the port. Regardless of how it got here, this flycatcher won over our hearts with the fly catching performance he gave while inside that palm tree.

Cattle Tyrant, a member of the tyrant-flycatcher family, catching a fly