

not review

2003-160

## Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form

CFO-RC FILE X: \_\_\_\_\_

RESULTS: \_\_\_\_\_

**Species (please include common and scientific name):** Cassin's Vireo (*Vireo cassinii*)  
(Andrews and Righter report no previous records. Levad, Potter, and Dexter report the following: Two early records (4 Sep 1906 Douglas Spring in western Moffat County and Jul 1907 at Coventry, Montrose County) reported by Cary (1909). "Non-plumbeus" and "yellow-subspecies" Solitary Vireos were reported 21 Aug 1971 at Durango ("yellow subspecies"), 4 Oct 1985 at Eagle JM ("non-plumbeus"), 6 September 1989 at Glenwood Springs ("non-plumbeus") and 2 October 1996 east of Grand Junction ("non-plumbeus"). Two Cassin's Vireos were reported foraging in a cottonwood at Connected Lakes State park in Mesa County on 24 September 2000.) The last observation is less than ½ mile from this location of this report.

**Date(s) of Observation:** 5 October 2001

**Number of birds seen:** 1      **Sex:** U      **Plumage:** Bird was in hand; plumage was fresh, and based on skull ossification, bird was aged as hatch year.

**Exact location:** Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory banding station at Lucy Ferril Ela Sanctuary. Adjacent to Connected Lakes State Park west of Grand Junction in Mesa County.

**Length of observation:** 1 hour      **Time(s) of observation:** 1000-1100

**Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you:** none

**Other observers who independently saw the bird(s):** none

**Light Conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s); position):**  
Excellent.

**Optical equipment used:** none.

**Distance from bird(s) (estimated unless otherwise noted):** In hand.

**Was bird(s) photographed?** yes      **Have you submitted photos?** Yes

**Who took the photographs?** Glenn Giroir

**Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred:**

Lowland cottonwood riparian with understory of tamarisk, Russian olive, willow, and skunkbrush. The net in which the bird was captured was approximately 10 meters from the bank of the Colorado River, and the net ran through dense tamarisk.

**Describe the bird's behavior (flying, feeding, habits, behaviors used in identifying the species or in supporting the identification):** None – bird was in hand.

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**Describe the bird in detail. This is the most important part of this report. Include the overall size and shape and how you placed the bird in the general group that you did. Give complete details of plumage, including head, throat, undersides, nape, back, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird(s). Describe other important details, such as color and shape of bill, legs, eye, (etc.) that were important in making the identification. (Fill out this portion even if photographs are submitted; you may attach additional sheets, drawings, field sketches or copy field notes):** Relatively small songbird with stout, hooked bill and short tail identified the bird as a vireo. Bold white eye ring and lores, eye ring broken in front of eye, and distinct wingbars identified the bird as a "Solitary Vireo". Olive green wash on the head, back, flanks, and wing edging indicated Cassin's Vireo. Measurements in the hand were compared to Peter Pyle's Identification Guide to North American Birds. Exposed Culmen was 9.3mm, wing was 69mm, tail was 49mm, and wing-tail measurements was 20mm. All of these measurements fit for Cassin's Vireo. With the combination of the described plumage characteristics and measurements, the bird was identified as Cassin's Vireo.

**Describe birds call or song:** none.

**Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them:** Plumbeous Vireo is similar in overall appearance, however its crown, face and back are uniformly gray, sometime with a slight olive tinge if plumage is fresh. Flanks are washed grayish, sometimes with a slight olive tinge if fresh. Our vireo had a fairly strong olive wash over its head, back and flanks. All of the measurements taken in the hand fell out of the range of the larger Plumbeous Vireo.

Blue-headed Vireo is similar but the crown and face is bright bluish, contrasting with the bright olive back. Our vireo did not display this contrast. Bill measurement for our vireo just fell outside of the range of that of the "solitarius" form of Blue-headed Vireo, and all measurements fell out of the range of the larger "alticola" form.

**What is your prior experience with this and similar-appearing species?** Have banded several Cassin's and Plumbeous Vireos at Barr Lake State Park in Brighton, CO. Have conducted research on Plumbeous Vireo, documenting nearly 100 breeding territories at Colorado National Monument, CO.

**List books, guides, recordings or other sources consulted and how this influenced your identification (during and after observation):**

In-hand bird compared with painting in National Geographic field guide and Peter Pyle's Identification Guide to North American Birds.

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This report was made from notes made **after** the observation.

**Date of written report:**

3/3/2002

**Reporting observer:**

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