

CFO-ORC FILE # 1998-99

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

ACCEPTED (70)NEW STATE RECORD UNUSUAL RECORD X✓ rec'd 12.98**Species:** Blue-headed Vireo (*Vireo solitarius*)**Date:** 12 September 1996**Number seen:** one**Sex:** unknown**Plumage:** First Basic**Locality:** Barr Lake State Park**Elevation:** 5000'**Nearest town:** Brighton**County:** Adams**Time observed:** about 09:50 - 10:30 MDT**Duration of observation:** total of about 20 minutes

Description: I caught a Blue-headed Vireo while operating Colorado Bird Observatory's fall migration banding station at Barr Lake State Park. I knew immediately upon finding it in a net that it was a Blue-headed Vireo. I processed the bird then photographed it.

The bird was obviously a "Solitary" Vireo with a blue-gray crown and face, white chin and throat, white spectacles, green back and rump, and green-edged remiges and tail (the outermost having a white outer web). The underparts were white except for yellow-green sides and flanks. It had a substantial dark vireo bill (thickish and quite hooked for such a small bird) on which the basal 2/3 were bluish-gray and the tip blackish. It had two broad, yellowy-white wingbars. The legs were blue-gray. The bird was released in the area of the banding station.

The only species that can cause confusion is Cassin's Vireo. Some Cassin's can approach Blue-headed in having a grayish head, but I have yet to see a Cassin's either in person or in photographs that closely approached the strong blue on the head of a typical Blue-headed Vireo. The bird in question had the strong contrast of green nape to blue crown and face typical of Blue-headed, not the subtle change from grayish to green that the bluest of Cassin's Vireos show. While some Cassin's could cause problems, this is one of those situations where if you're trying hard to make a bird a Blue-headed, it's almost certainly not one.

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration): The bird gave a few typically-vireo, harsh, complaining vocalizations while being extracted from the net.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly-appearing species? I have seen 100s of Blue-headed Vireos and 10s of Cassin's Vireos. I have also banded both species on many occasions. No other species is easily confused with Blue-headed Vireo.

Light conditions: sun behind me**Optical equipment used:** 20/10 eyeballs**Distance, and how estimated:** estimated closest distance to eyes at 0.9 feet

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Other observers who saw the bird with you: Scott Hutchings, Mike Carter, Chuck Aid, Jim Bradley

Other observers who saw the bird independently: none

If photographed, type of equipment and film: Nikon and Fujichrome

List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

a) at time of observation: none

b) after observation: none

Reporting observer: Tony Leukering

Signature: 

Address: Colorado Bird Observatory, 13401 Piccadilly Road, Brighton, CO 80601

Date report was written: This report was written on 7 December 1996 and 9 October 1998 from memory and with reference to the photos of the individual.