

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

(A)

NEW STATE RECORD _____ UNUSUAL RECORD X

rec'd 1/26/03

Species: Blue-headed Vireo (*Vireo solitarius*)**Date:** 25 October 2000**Number seen:** one**Sex:** unknown**Plumage:** adult**Locality:** Barr Lake State Park**Elevation:** about 5000'

Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory office

Nearest town: Brighton**County:** Adams**Time observed:** late morning/early afternoon**Duration of observation:** a total of about 10 minutes**Description:**

I found the bird actively foraging in the trees immediately behind the RMBO office. The most striking features were the white spectacles surrounding each eye and extending forward to the lores on the blue-gray head. The head coloration contrasted strongly with the rest of the body, accentuating the white spectacles. Of special contrast was the line intersection of the white throat with the blue-gray of the cheeks. There was no "bleeding" of colors at this intersection, but rather a sharp demarcation. I paid particular attention to this feature as I knew it was important in separating *V. solitarius* from other vireo species. The underparts were white, except for bright yellow flanks. The upperpart coloration was greenish. I don't recall any subtle features like soft part coloration. I spent most of the time focusing on the head and noting the contrast in the head coloration with the rest of the body, as well as the contrast between it and the pure white throat.

Separation from similar species:

Of the vireo species, *V. cassinii* is the most easily confused with *V. solitarius*. I knew this from experience at RMBO's Barr Lake banding station where several *V. cassinii* are caught each year and carefully scrutinized. Some bright *V. cassinii* can appear similar to *V. solitarius* in that head coloration shows some contrast with the upperparts. However, throat pattern is still useful in separating these species. In *V. cassinii*, the white throat will blend into the cheeks, whereas in *V. solitarius* there is always a very clear break. Also, timing of migration may be useful here. *V. cassinii* is an early migrant (late August - mid-Sept), whereas *V. solitarius* is more likely to occur in Colorado in October - early Nov (Leukering pers. comm.).

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration): I heard none.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly-appearing species? I have seen several *V. cassinii* in-the-hand at the RMBO banding station, as well as dozens others while birding in this state and California. I am most familiar with *V. solitarius* while living in the east, particularly Indiana, Mississippi and Louisiana where I have seen several dozen.

Light conditions: I don't recall.

Optical equipment used: Zeiss 7x42 binoculars

Distance, and how estimated: estimated closest distance at about 10-15 feet.

Other observers who saw the bird with you: Arvind Panjabi and David Hanni

Other observers who saw the bird independently: Bob Spencer on 26 October.

If photographed, type of equipment and film: I did not photograph

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

a) at time of observation: none

b) after observation: I undoubtedly looked at the common field guides, but don't remember exactly which ones. However, the identification was made prior to consultation of these field guides.

Reporting observer: Doug Faulkner

Signature: Doug Faulkner

Address: Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, 14500 Lark Bunting Lane, Brighton, CO 80603

Date report was written: This report was written on 7 Sept 2002 from memory.