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## COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

WHITE-EYED VIREOVireo flavifronsLocation: Olive Marsh; Pueblo; Pueblo County, ColoradoDate: August 16, 1992Setting:

I found this bird towards the western edge of Olive Marsh, a dense tangled woodland in the riparian corridor on the north bank of the Arkansas River in Pueblo. I first saw it as it flew out of a Russian Olive hedge, chased by a male Yellow Warbler. The White-eyed Vireo perched in a small tree at about 15 feet height, but moved so that I never got a clear view and I wasn't sure of the bird's identity. A few minutes later, I returned past this area and heard a bird singing that I knew at once was a White-eyed Vireo. It sang persistently from low in the Russian Olives and I was able to see it well at close range (25 feet) with 10X binoculars. I observed the bird from 11:30 a.m. until 11:55 a.m. The sky was weakly overcast and light conditions were very good.

Description:

This bird was secretive and hard to see as it moved sluggishly in the interior of the Russian Olive thicket. It spent most of its time between 2-6 feet from the ground.

It was a very worn bird in breeding plumage with ragged wing feathers and looked rather scruffy. (I think White-eyed Vireos have a tendency to look a little ragged and disconnected even in high plumage). It was about 5" long and plump, with had a rather short tail. The bill was grey, thick and stubby with a small pointed hook. The face was worn and lighter grey than the crown. The wings and tail were blackish and the bird had two bright, sharp yellowish-white wingbars. The back was dull greenish-grey. The throat was dull white, as was the center of the breast and rest of undersides. The bird had yellow-washed flanks but the yellow did not connect across the center of the whitish chest. The lores were deep yellow, connecting over the forehead. The eyering was weakly connected to the yellow lores and so washed out that it was nearly white. The forehead and crown were dark grey. The iris was white.

The bird was very vocal, although the song was not very enthusiastic or far-carrying. It was always easier to hear than to see in the heavy thicket that it favored. The song was a varied warble that I described as "zee churr chick-or-ee chick". The second "churr" note was a guttural rattle and the final "chick" note had a more emphatic upward inflection. The bird delivered the song while stationary at a twig perch. It would tip its head back, point its bill upward and sing the song. It sang about 4-5 songs/minute for about 20 minutes. It also called, using either an emphatic warbler like "chip", a buzzy "zee" like the first note of the song, or a high chirp like a weak version of the alarm note of the American Robin.

Similar Species:

Small size, rather active insect-gleaning habits, sturdy bill indicates vireo. Red-eyed, Philadelphia and Warbling vireos eliminated by lack of wingbars. Gray, Hutton's and Bell's vireos lack strong yellow spectacles, white iris. Solitary Vireo lacks yellow in spectacles, white iris. Yellow-throated Vireo has yellow chin and throat and lacks white iris.

Experience with Species:

I have seen all vireos mentioned in the section above. I saw the Briggsdale White-eyed Vireos in May 1992.

This report is prepared from notes made during and after observation.



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