

WHITE-EYED VIREO - Vireo griseus

DATE: May 20, 1992.

LOCATION: Crow Valley Campground, Pawnee National Grassland, Briggsdale, Weld County, Colorado.

NUMBER OF BIRDS SEEN: Two.

PLUMAGE AND SEX: One adult male and one adult female.

TIME OF OBSERVATION: 0935 to 1015 MDT.

WEATHER CONDITIONS: Mostly clear with some high cirrus; Wind, southeast 15 MPH; temperature 65°.

HABITAT: Riparian, mostly willows and cottonwoods with patches of dense undergrowth.

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT: 10X50 Bushnell Binoculars.

DISTANCE FROM BIRDS AND HOW MEASURED: 15' to 100'; estimated.

OTHER OBSERVERS WHO INDEPENDENTLY IDENTIFIED THE BIRD: Dr. Ted Cooper - 9400 East Maplewood Ave., #4, Englewood, CO 80111 was with me when I "discovered" the birds. Since I do not (and have not for nearly two years) called the "Colorado Bird Report", I was unaware until later on that they had been found a couple of days earlier. Dr. Cooper, a beginning birder, had never seen a White-eyed Vireo.

BIRD/SUN ORIENTATION: A variable factor. At times the male appeared in bright sunlight, favoring a perch now and then in a dead snag in a small willow. The female preferred to remain closer to the ground and out of the direct sunlight.

BEHAVIOR AND DEMEANOR: I first observed the male as it popped up right in front of me at eye-level in a small willow. We (Dr. Cooper) and I followed the bird as it nervously flitted from one perch to another acting very agitated by our presence. The male remained in the immediate vicinity offering excellent views of it. After about ten minutes, a second bird came into view, this one being slightly less colorful which we suspected was a female. After giving us the "once-over", she darted a short distance away and disappeared into a low, brushy area. A few moments later, she reappeared, this time carrying a very small bit of wood or piece of bark in her beak. Carrying this material, she flew toward a small willow surrounded at the base by some rather thick shrubs and disappeared. Shortly thereafter, the male appeared again also carrying a small bit of "nesting material" into the place where the female had gone. We continued to watch this activity as the two birds busily came and went, each time carrying "nesting material". At first, they seemed rather agitated by our presence, particularly the male; but gradually they became less concerned with us and more interested in going about the business of building a nest. We both agreed it was best to quietly back away and leave the birds alone. We made no attempt to try and view the nest. I was quite certain that this was the first nesting record for Colorado for a White-eyed Vireo which has been recorded less than ten times for the state (the first record occurring on May 10, 1974 when one was observed below the dam at Two Buttes Reservoir in Baca County).

POST SCRIPT: I returned to the area on the afternoon of May 28 and although I remained in the vicinity for the better part of an hour at the place where we observed the nest building activity on May 20, there was no sign of either bird. The area was badly trampled down which was not the case on May 20. I learned a day or so later, that specific directions to the exact location of the nest were given out over the

"Colorado Bird Report" (even in relation to the three nearby and only Juniper trees in the area). In my opinion this was an irresponsible act and could easily have caused the demise of the nesting attempt. The person(s) who called in this information had to be absolutely mindless. Anything for a new bird! (and get one's name announced on the tape). Shameful! Nevertheless, perhaps the birds were still around and were inactive due to the time of day. I hope that this was the case. Irrespective, announcing the exact nesting location (of any bird) was terribly wrong whether or not the birds were frightened away. I understand that the "Colorado Bird Report" is a great benefit for all the "Listers", but in this case it went far beyond good reason.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION: Male: Crown olive-green. Forehead bright olive-green. Face with broad yellow stripe extending from the base of the bill to and encircling the eye. Lores dusky. Iris white (not always easily seen). Bill short and stocky and grayish. Nape and auricular area grayish. Back olive-green with brighter olive-green on the rump and upper-tail coverts. Uppertail grayish. Wings grayish-brown with two prominent yellowish-white wing bars. Underparts throat whitish with sides and flanks tinged with yellow and green and rest of underparts white. Female: Patterned much the same as the male but when observed together the female was noticeably duller.

VOCALIZATION: Despite all of the activity, we heard no calls or songs.

ELIMINATION OF SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO (Vireo flavifrons): Not really that similar. Has bright yellow spectacles, but chin, throat and breast bright yellow. Rest of underparts white. Rump is gray. Iris is dark.

SOLITARY VIREO (Vireo solitarius): Even less similar. The plumbeus race is decidedly a grayer with broad, bold white spectacles. The cassinii and solitarius races also have broad, bold white spectacles. All races have dark irises.

BELL'S VIREO (Vireo bellii): Lacks prominent spectacles and has very faint two wing bars. Crown is mostly grayish.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

WHITE-EYED VIREO: Observed many times in many places in the United States. In the Chicago, Illinois area during migration in the 1940's. On central Long Island, New York during the 1950's and early 1960's where it breeds. In South Carolina during the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's. Also observed during many visits to southern Texas in the 1970's and 1980's. This was my first sighting in Colorado.

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO: Seen during migration in the Chicago, Illinois area during the 1940's, and on its breeding grounds on the lower peninsula of Michigan (1940's) and central Minnesota (1970's) and in the Turtle Mountains of North Dakota (1980's). Also seen on Long Island, New York during migration in the 1950's and early 1960's as well as in Texas during many trips to that state. Have seen but four times in Colorado since 1964.

SOLITARY VIREO: V. s. plumbeus: Have seen hundreds of times in Colorado during migration and on breeding grounds since 1964. V. s. cassinii: seen perhaps 50 times in Colorado during migration (primarily during the fall) since 1964. V. s. solitarius: Have seen many times in the eastern half of the United States beginning in the early 1940's. Have never seen this race in Colorado.

BELL'S VIREO: Seen in southeastern Arizona when I lived there in the early 1960's and during many subsequent visits since (as recently as May of this year). Observed in the San Diego area of California in the late 1970's. And seen regularly every year at various breeding sites in Colorado since 1964.

BOOKS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND ADVICE CONSULTED THAT INFLUENCED THIS REPORT:

Dr. Cooper and I exchanged verbal notes during the period of observation as we watched the birds for about 45 minutes, agreeing on several key points of field observation. No field guides were consulted.

THIS REPORT WAS WRITTEN FROM NOTES TAKEN IN THE FIELD AT THE TIME OF OBSERVATION AND AFTERWARDS.

OBSERVER MAKING THIS REPORT:

Jack Reddall - 4450 South Alton Street, Englewood, Colorado 80111-1205.

Jack Reddall

DATE: May 30, 1992

51-92-20

COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

WHITE-EYED VIREO

Vireo flavifrons

Location: Crow Valley Campground; Briggsdale; Weld County, Colorado

Date: May 18, 1992

These two birds were discovered by Joe Himmel.

Setting:

I observed these birds in the company of Brandon Percival. We observed the birds with binoculars about 5 times between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Most observations were short (less than 15 minutes) and relatively close up (25-100 feet). The birds were rather easy to find as they came into view several times while we were scanning the trees and shrubs for migrants. They were silent except for one song that I heard when we first arrived. The birds were small, chunky and rather active. They gleaned insects from low in trees and brush, rarely from weed stalks, and stayed around the southwest corner of the wooded area of Crow Valley Campground. I watched one pick moths off foliage and eat them.

Description:

One bird was brighter, yellower and had a white iris. This was presumably the male. The female was duller, less yellow and had a pearly grey iris. The birds were small, about 6" long, and chunky. I will describe the male. The bill was heavy for a small bird: short, stout and bluntly hooked, with a curved upper mandible. The bird's head and back were grey above. The wing and tail were blackish. There were two strong white wingbars. The undersides were white with yellow flanks barely connected by a narrow, faded yellow breastband. The throat was white. The bird had broad yellow "spectacles" (eyering + lores). Crown and forehead were dark grey.

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.

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

Mark Janos

Mark Janos
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Pueblo, CO 81001

SPECIES: WHITE EYED VIREO
(Vernacular Name)

51-92-20
VIREO GRISEUS
(Scientific Name)

DATE(S): 5-15-92 TIME OF OBSERVATION: 12:00 P.M. TO 12:30 P.M.
5-21-92 2:30 P.M. 3:45 P.M.

EXACT LOCATION: CROW VALLEY CAMPGROUND

NEAREST TOWN: BRIGGS DALE COUNTY: WELD

OTHER OBSERVERS WHO INDEPENDENTLY IDENTIFIED THIS BIRD:

JOE HIMMEL, J.B. HAYES, DAVE LEATHERMAN AND MANY OTHERS

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT: BAUSCH & LOMB 8-36 CUSTOM BINOCULARS

WEATHER CONDITIONS: CLEAR AND SUNNY

BIRD/SUN ORIENTATION: BIRD DIRECTLY IN FRONT, SUN DIRECTLY OVERHEAD

DISTANCE FROM BIRD AND HOW MEASURED: 25 FEET, APPROXIMATED

NUMBER OF BIRDS SEEN: 2 SEX: MALE & FEMALE PLUMAGE: BREEDING

BEHAVIOR AND DEMEANOR: THEY FORAGED THROUGH THE TENSE WEEDY AREA AT THE BASE OF A GROUP OF JUNIPERS AND ALSO IN THE LOWER BRANCHES OF THE JUNIPERS. THEY CALLED REPEATEDLY AS THEY FLITTED FROM BUSH TO BUSH, ALWAYS REMAINING IN THE THICKEST SHRUBBERY EXCEPT FOR THE 10-20 SECONDS THAT THEY APPEARED IN THE OPEN AREAS AT THE BASE OF THE JUNIPERS

HEAD & NECK (forehead, crown, auricular & malar regions, median line, etc.):
HEAD MEDIUM GRAY FROM FOREHEAD TO NAPE, YELLOW SPECTACLES AROUND EYES AND TO BASE OF BILL.

EYES & LORES (supercilium, eye-ring, eye-stripe, color, etc.):
EYES WHITE WITH BLACK PUPIL, YELLOW SPECTACLES WITH A LITTLE WHITE MIXED IN, DARK LINE BELOW SPECTACLES NOT VERY DISTINCT
LOWER & UPPER MANDIBLES (color & shape): BILL COMPLETELY BLACK

LEGS & FEET: APPEARED TO BE DARK

UPPERPARTS (nape, back, rump, uppertail coverts, etc.): NAPE MEDIUM GRAY EXTENDING ONTO BACK; BACK AND RUMP GRAY MIXED WITH OLIVE; TAIL AND WINGS BLACKISH; TWO WHITISH WING BARS ON EACH WING.

UNDERPARTS (chin, throat, belly, sides, flanks, crissum, etc.): THROAT WHITE FADING TO LIGHT GRAY ON BREAST, LOWER BELLY; UNDERTAIL COVERTS WHITISH; SLIGHT YELLOWISH COLOR TO SIDES

51-92-20

ETRICES (inner, middle & outer tail feathers; color, pattern, shape, etc.):
TAIL LOOKED UNIFORMLY BLACKISH; SOMEWHAT LONG

INGS (color, length, shape, bars, coverts, etc.): WINGS WERE BLACK
WITH TWO WHITISH WING BARS

LOCALIZATION (call/song, method of delivery, i.e., from perch, in flight):
BUZZY CHATTERING LASTING FOR 3-4 NOTES

HABITAT: THICK BRUSHY AREA, JUNIPERS, DEAD SNAGS WITH BRUSH
GROWN UP AROUND

ELIMINATION OF SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

YELLOW SPECTACLES RULE OUT ALL WARBLERS EXCEPT MALE CANADA.
MALE CANADA WARBLER ALMOST ENTIRELY YELLOW UNDERNEATH WITH BLACK
NECKLACE. AND VERY DARK ON TOP

WHITE EYES RULE OUT ALL VIREOS PLUS WHITE UNDERNEATH RULES OUT ALL
BUT BLACK CAPPED AND EASTERN FORM OF SOLITARY VIREO. BLACK
CAPPED VIREO HAS DISTINCTLY DARKER HEAD WITH LARGE WHITE SPECTACLES.
EASTERN FORM OF SOLITARY VIREO HAS GREATER CONTRAST BETWEEN
HEAD AND BACK AND SPECTACLES ARE WHITISH.

PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

I HAVE SEEN SEVERAL WHITE EYED VIREOS IN TEXAS, TENNESSEE,
AND NORTH CAROLINA. THE CALLS WERE WHAT ORIGINALLY CAUGHT
MY ATTENTION BECAUSE I COULD TELL THAT THEY WERE VIREO-LIKE
BUT NOT ONES THAT I HAD PREVIOUSLY HEARD IN COLORADO.

BOOKS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND ADVICE CONSULTED THAT INFLUENCED THIS REPORT:

AUDUBON MASTER SERIES GUIDES TO BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA

THIS REPORT WRITTEN FROM NOTES MADE DURING ☒ AFTER ☒ OBSERVATION; ☐ FROM MEMORY

NAME: JOE MAMMOSEY SIGNATURE: Joseph Mammoser DATE: 6-26-92