

WHITE-EYED VIREO (Vireo griseus)

This species was seen and heard singing at 7:00 A.M. on May 14, 1992, in a riparian area east of Riverside Reservoir in Weld County, Colorado. This area is north of US Highway #34 on CR #87, just before reaching the outlet channel of the reservoir. CR #87 is at mile marker #136 at a spot called "Masters". Only two houses stand at this intersection.

Upon entering the riparian area, I heard this bird singing about 15' up in a willow tree. Two weeks before I was listening to this same song near Fayetteville, Arkansas, where I was attending, along with my sister, the spring meeting of the Arkansas State Audubon Society. I immediately recognized the song, but could not locate the bird for nearly twenty-five minutes. It was singing continuously, but deeply concealed in the leaves and not moving around. Finally, thankfully, it did change position, and moved into an exposed position. The thickness of the bill, and generally inactive nature, assured me that it was a vireo. It has a greenish-gray back, with two wing bars. Strikingly apparent was the bright yellow lores, or spectacles. The flanks are washed with yellow, but the throat and belly are white. At one moment, the morning sun reflected white off the iris, something I had really never seen before. The bird sang continuously, not only with the typical "whit" at the beginning and ending of a variable phrase, but often variations on the theme, with the initial "whit" and several notes following, or three/four notes with the closing "whit". The bird was ultimately seen in good light, within fifteen yards distance, with 8x binoculars. I stayed in visual contact with the bird for another twenty minutes, just to enjoy the unusual sighting.

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