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COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

WHITE-EYED VIREO

Vireo flavifrons

SHOULD BE griseus Thank you!

Location: Pueblo City Park; Pueblo; Pueblo County, Colorado

Date: May 6, 1995

Setting:

I was birding alone on a sunny, warm spring morning in Pueblo City Park. I only had a few minutes to kill. It was a late spring, with late leafing out and few warblers yet. I was searching the edges of a small, wild ravine that intrudes into the more civilized parts of City Park. I heard a loud chip down in the bottom of the ravine and I "pished" to attract the bird. It was an Orange-crowned Warbler. As it flew up to see what I was up to, a second bird was attracted and came towards me as well. It was the White-eyed Vireo. It flitted actively around the terminal tips of the smaller branches. Although it was high in the tree (about 20') it was actually just below my line of site because I was higher than it at the top of the ravine. Therefore I actually looked down on the bird to observe it at very close range (15-30 feet). The observation period was very brief, perhaps one minute. But the light was bright, and I got great looks in my B & L 10x40 Elites binoculars.

Description:

The bird was an adult in breeding plumage. It was a small bird, about the size of a small sparrow (i.e. 6" long) and plump, with a short tail and large head. It was slight longer and distinctly larger than the Wilson's Warbler, but was about the size of the Orange-crowned Warbler next to it (but plumper). It had a blunt, dark bill with a slight hook at the end. The iris was white. The bird had wide, conspicuous yellow "spectacles" on an otherwise slate gray head. The back was olive-gray. The wings were blackish with two strong yellowish-white wingbars. The bird had a white throat and underparts with a strong yellow wash to the flanks and a weaker yellowish tinge to the center of the breast.

Similar Species:

The small size, active habits and small stout bill indicate a vireo. Red-eyed, Philadelphia and Warbling vireos do not have wingbars. Solitary, Bell's, Hutton's and Gray vireos do not have the white iris nor the strong yellow spectacles. Yellow-throated Vireo has a yellow throat and lacks the white iris.

Experience with Species:

I have seen all the vireos mentioned in the section above. This is the sixth White-eyed Vireo that I have seen in Colorado since 1992.

This report is prepared from notes made during observation.

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