

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO - Vireo flavifrons

51-92-80

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DATE: April 28, 1992.

LOCATION: Barr Lake State Park, Adams County, Colorado.

NUMBER OF BIRDS SEEN: One.

PLUMAGE AND SEX: Adult (probably a male).

TIME OF OBSERVATION: 1600-1610 MDT.

WEATHER CONDITIONS: Clear sky; Wind, NW @ 5 MPH; Temperature 80°.

HABITAT: Lakeside deciduous trees (cottonwoods and willows).

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT: 10X50 Bushnell Binoculars.

OTHER OBSERVERS WHO INDEPENDENTLY IDENTIFIED THE BIRD: None that I am aware of.

DISTANCE FROM THE BIRD AND HOW MEASURED: 15' to 30' directly overhead. Estimated.

BIRD/SUN ORIENTATION: Bright afternoon sun directly upon the bird (at times it was in the shade) coming from the observer's left side.

BEHAVIOR AND DEMEANOR: The bird's obvious "vireo-like" song first drew my attention. Eventually located it about 20 feet over my head as it searched among the outer branches of a very tall cottonwood for food. Movements were slow and deliberate as it gleaned food from the leaves and small branches, occasionally pausing to deliver its rather loud song. It flew to different branches now and then, but most of the time it appeared content to move about the tree sluggishly pursuing its feeding activity.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION:

Head and Face: Forehead, crown and nape bright olive-green. Lores bright yellow with a dark eye surrounded by bright yellow "spectacles".  
Mandibles: Short and stout, grayish. Legs and Feet: Dark. Upper-parts: Back olive-green observed when the bird hung nearly upside down to snare a bit of food off a leaf. However, rump and uppertail was not readily noted since the bird was above me all the time. Underparts Chin, throat, breast and sides bright lemon yellow. Belly and undertail coverts white. No streaking or barring on undersides. Retrices: Did not make any notes of the tail. Wings: Dark grayish-black with two, obvious white wingbars on the upperwing.

VOCALIZATION: Rich, reedy notes and phrases with definite pauses very similar to those of the Red-eyed Vireo (Vireo olivaceus) but lower pitched and more deliberate. Delivered while perched.

ELIMINATION OF SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

PRAIRIE WARBLER (Dendroica discolor): Smaller, thinner warbler-like bill. Male: Has a bright yellow supercilium, a black line through and below the eye and lacks the yellow spectacles. Has a prominent yellow spot directly below the eye. Yellow sides heavily streaked with black. Has large white spots on underside of tail. Pumps tail. Female: Similarly marked as male but less distinctly and duller. Vocalization: Much different. Song is an off-key, bunch of run together "zees" up the chromatic scale.



PINE WARBLER (Dendroica pinus): Smaller, thinner warbler-like bill. Male: Somewhat resembles V. flavifrons but lacks distinctive broad, yellow spectacles and lores and has dark streaking on its sides. Female: Much duller than male particularly on the throat and breast. Vocalization: Song is a very dry trill on one pitch and very similar to that given by the Chipping Sparrow (Spizella passerina).

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT (Icteria virens): Much too large. Has white spectacles and gray lores. Lacks wingbars. Vocalization: Calls are a conglomeration of whistles, hoots and harsh squawks.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO: Seen many times during migration in the 1940's in the Chicago, Illinois area and on its breeding grounds on the lower peninsula of Michigan and in central Minnesota and Bottineau County of North Dakota (1970's). Also seen in migration on Long Island, New York in the 1950's and early 1960's. Seen during migration at various places in Texas (Hunt, High Island) during many visits there over the years. This represents my third sighting in Colorado since 1964.

PRAIRIE WARBLER: Observed over many years (1940's to present) on its breeding grounds in the pine barrens of central and eastern Long Island, New York. Seen but twice in Colorado since 1964.

PINE WARBLER: Another common breeder (and occasionally in winter) in the tall pines of central and eastern Long Island, New York where I have observed many over the years. Also observed in southeastern Texas (Chambers County) and in South Carolina (Dillon and Georgetown Counties) where it breeds. Seen but once in Colorado-December 21, 1986 in Denver.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: Seen literally "hundreds" throughout a large part of the United State since the 1940's: Illinois, New York, South Carolina, North Dakota, Texas and Colorado and Arizona in the west.

BOOKS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND ADVICE CONSULTED THAT INFLUENCED THIS REPORT:

None required.

THIS REPORT WAS WRITTEN BASED UPON BRIEF NOTES MADE AT THE TIME OF OBSERVATION AND FROM MEMORY.

OBSERVER MAKING THIS REPORT:

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Jack Reddall  
DATE: May 1, 1992

