

Bird Sighting

Submitter: David Salas Wheeler
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Species: Philadelphia vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*)

Date sighted: 8 Aug 1992

Place sighted: West of Ogden, south of Hwy 39 and railroad tracks, approximately 0.9 miles west of I-15.

Habitat: Several acres of riparian woodland (cottonwoods, boxelders, fruit trees, etc.) with a river and swampy pond fringed by trees and overhanging bushes.

Behavior: Warbler/vireo-like. Gleaning the leaves in the interior of boxelders for gnats (of which there was an abundance around the leaves!!). The bird moved deliberately, less frenetically than the yellow warblers that passed through that and nearby trees. It stayed mostly about 20 to 30 feet above the ground, but descended also to smaller boxelders no more than a foot or two above the ground.

Time sighted: 7:15 PM, and for several minutes afterwards, on and off.

Distance: Approximately 10 yards.

Misc.: We were at an approximately right angle to the sun (this changed slightly as we followed the bird over the minutes) so the sun illuminated the colors of the bird without silhouetting or washing them out. Not long afterwards, other birds passed through the same tree, including yellow warblers and a warbling vireo, allowing us to check for color distortions due to setting sun--none. The P. vireo moved in and out of the shadows during its feeding.

Even though it is relatively early in the year for fall warbler migration, the drought in the West has changed migration patterns of birds and blooming times of wildflowers throughout the year. There were Nashville and Townsend's warblers in the same area that afternoon/evening, indicating that the migration has begun.

Description:

- Size of a warbler.
- Jizz/shape of a warbler/vireo.
- Bill vireo/warbler-like.
- Distinctly yellow below (upper breast/throat to undertail coverts, with a slight paling of the yellow in the vent area, though certainly not a white band as found in the Nashville warbler). The yellow did not extend to face.
- Blue-gray/gray head above, very noticeable.
- Olivy/grayish back and wings.
- Top of tail darker than back.
- No wing bars.
- Distinctly white eyebrow stripe in gray face, extending beyond eye. A small white patch below eye.
- Dark eye, with no sign of red.

Other observers: Dana Green, Julie VanMoorhem.

Optical aids: All of us had binoculars. Mine were Bausch & Lomb Custom, 10 x 40.