

SPECIES OF THE MONTH**YELLOW-GREEN VIREO****JUNE 2025**

The Yellow-green Vireo (*Vireo flavoviridis*), first reported in Arizona in 1969, is a casual visitor to the state. It has been reported in Cochise, Maricopa, Pima, Pinal, and Santa Cruz counties. The species winters in the tropics of central and northwestern South America and breeds from Panama to southern Sonora and southern Texas. It arrives in southern Sonora in late May and establishes territories in June. Its nesting season is closely tied to the monsoon season. Most Arizona Yellow-green Vireo records are from mid-May to mid-August, which suggests the possibility of overshoots from Sonora. However, since 2017, there have been 2 September records and 1 report as late as 8-10 October. Reports along the California and Baja California, Mexico coasts are typically in September and October. Twenty-one reports have been accepted by the Arizona Bird Committee, and it is reviewing the October 2024 report.

Most Arizona reports are in foothill drainages and wet areas with different mixtures of willows, cottonwoods, ash, sycamore, and hackberry. Nesting has not been confirmed, although a few recordings have been made of singing birds.



Yellow-green Vireo, Maricopa County, 8 October 2024.
Photo by Adam Stein

The Yellow-green Vireo is closely related to the Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*), a common breeding bird in eastern North America and a rare visitor to Arizona. The 2 species are similar in appearance, and field marks require careful scrutiny for positive identification. The Yellow-green Vireo's crown is drabber gray than that of the Red-eyed Vireo with a less contrasting eyebrow. The bill is larger and paler, and the cheeks and sides of the neck are yellowish rather than white as in the Red-eyed Vireo. The vent and undertail coverts are also brighter yellow. The red eyes are duller red than those of its counterpart, but the color difference is such that it is not likely a useful distinguishing characteristic.

Its song is similar to that of the Red-eyed Vireo but shorter and less musical. It delivers a persistent series of short phrases interspersed with longer pauses, "viree, viree, fee, vireo". The song is often described as similar to a House Sparrow chirping. Calls include a nasal mew, high nasal "chaa" used in scolding, and high nasal rasping alarm notes.