

## DOCUMENTATION OF BIRD SIGHTING IN IOWA

*Species* Bell's Vireo

*How many* One

*Location* Railroad Tracks, 1/4 m. east of Chautauqua Park, Fairfield, IA (Jefferson County, SE Iowa)

*Type of habitat* On bank of railroad easement. A strip about 100 feet long. Buckbrush, scrubby trees (cherry, and other deciduous), milkweed, rose. No trees higher than about 10-15 feet, some parts only 1-3 feet tall.

*When* May 27, May 28, May 30, 1988. Bird singing and carrying on as if it is on territory. I have not been back to check it again.

*Who* Dr. John Goodman, of Redlands, Calif., told me where to find it on May 26. I went and located it by its song, 25 feet from where Dr. Goodman had marked the spot. (Diane Porter, 908 East Briggs, Fairfield IA 52556)

*Others with you* Michael Porter accompanied me on one trip.

*Others before or after you* Dr. John Goodman

*Description*

(From my notes taken in presence of bird) Like a solitary vireo, but smaller. Head **olive** grey. Two faint wing bars, distal one stronger than proximal. Indistinct spectacles. Throat whitish. Underbelly quite yellow. Song rather wrenlike, like a question and answer, first ending up, then down. Bird shakes its tail when it sings.

*Similar species; how eliminated*

Spectacles rule out red-eyed, warbling, and Philadelphia.

Throat color rules out yellow-throated.

Head color, indistinct spectacles, and inconspicuous wing bars rule out solitary vireo.

Whitish color of spectacles rule out white-eyed vireo.

Song rules out everybody but Bell's vireo.

*Did anyone disagree or have reservations about the identification?* No.

*Viewing conditions: lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment* Clear sunny days.

Distance 10-100 feet (estimated). Zeiss 8-power and 10-power binoculars.

*Previous experience with species and similar ones:* First Bell's vireo I've seen, though I have heard the song before and had it identified for me by Harriet Barker, who does breeding bird census for Cornell in Chiricahua Mts of Arizona. I'm familiar with Red-eyed, solitary, warbling, and yellow-throated warblers.

*References and persons consulted before writing descriptions:* none. I noted what I saw. I knew what I was looking for, as I had been alerted to the bird by Dr. Goodman.

*How long before field notes made?* On the spot *This form completed* 6 days.