

**ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
HERITAGE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Animal Abstract

Element Code: ABPBW01120

Data Sensitivity: Yes

CLASSIFICATION, NOMENCLATURE, DESCRIPTION, RANGE

NAME: *Vireo atricapillus*

COMMON NAME: Black-capped vireo; Black-capped greenlet

SYNONYMS:

FAMILY: Vireonidae

AUTHOR, PLACE OF PUBLICATION: Woodhouse, 1852. Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Volume 6 number 2, p. 60.

TYPE LOCALITY: For *Vireo atricapillus* it is San Pedro River, 208 miles from San Antonio, on the road to El Paso del Norte, Texas.

TYPE SPECIMEN: S. W. Woodhouse, 1851, USNM (A15040), complete adult skin.

TAXONOMIC UNIQUENESS: There are 38 species of vireo's, 12 of which are reported in North America. There are also 25 subspecies. The Black-capped Vireo is one of the 12 species in North America.

DESCRIPTION: The Black-capped Vireo is 11 cm (4 ¼ - 4 ¾ in) long with the male being the only North American Vireo with a jet black head combined with white 'spectacles' formed by the eye ring and a white patch between eyes and bill. The back, shoulders and rump are light green-gray and the under parts are white with yellowish flanks. Each wing has two yellowish bars and the eyes are red. The female is similar but slaty gray where the male is black.

AIDS TO IDENTIFICATION: The jet-black head and white 'spectacles' are the *Vireo atricapillus* distinguishing characteristics. They are also very active and stay under cover.

ILLUSTRATIONS: Black and white drawing (Terres, 1980:951)
Color drawing (National Geographic, 1987: 349)
Color photo (Texas Parks and Wildlife, accessed 2002)
Color photo (Lasley In <http://home.earthlink.net/~glasley/bcvireo.html>)
Color photo (In <http://www.avesphoto.com/website/pictures/VIRBCP-1.jpg>)
Color drawing (Sibley 2000)

TOTAL RANGE: Their historical breeding range is believed to have extended from extreme south-central Kansas south through central Oklahoma, to western and central Texas and northern Mexico. Their current breeding range includes portions of western Oklahoma, central Texas and Coahuila, Mexico. The Black-capped Vireo winters on the Pacific slope of Mexico.

RANGE WITHIN ARIZONA: They are considered hypothetical in Arizona. This is based on a report of a male captured in a mist net, measured, and weighed at the Tanque Verde Guest Ranch east of Tucson on 4 April 1970. Since this individual was never photographed and since a specimen, diagnostic feathers, etc. have never been collected in the state, it is considered hypothetical.

SPECIES BIOLOGY AND POPULATION TRENDS

BIOLOGY: Their song consists of well spaced complex phrases grtzeepididid, prididzeegrtrt..., with a husky chattering quality. The call is a long, harsh, rising zhreee similar to Bewick's Wren scold; many variations. Black-capped vireos may live for more than 5 years, and usually return year after year to the same territory.

REPRODUCTION: Breeding season begins mid-March to mid-April. They select a nest site together but only the female constructs the nest taking 2-3 days to do so. Their nests are suspended from slender fork of twigs of oak, dogwood, or wild plum etc. Anywhere from 0.6-4.5 m (2-15 ft) above ground but usually 1-2.5 m (3-8 ft). The nest is a small cup with walls thickly felted with fine strips of cedar bark, leaves, coarse grasses, catkins and spiders' cocoons. The white eggs are laid April to August, and numbering between 3 and 5, usually 4. The eggs are incubated by both sexes for 14-17 days. They are sometimes double brooded. The young leave the nest 10-12 days after hatching.

FOOD HABIT: *Vireo atricapillus* eats small beetles, some spiders and small fleshy fruits. They feed low among dwarf oaks and other thickets, searching for insects and their eggs. They glean insects from foliage in a characteristic pose of hanging upside down and then fluttering to a lower branch.

HABITAT: They breed in scrub-oak woodland and shrubby growth in arid hilly regions, often on steep hillsides near water in Texas and central Oklahoma. They live in low brushy dry country in deep ravines with strong salt stream running at the bottom, in scrub oak ridges in cedars and chaparral brush on steep rocky slopes of mountains.

ELEVATION: Unknown.

PLANT COMMUNITY: Nests are commonly found in a variety of oaks and less frequently in sumacs, dogwood, and redbud.

POPULATION TRENDS: They are listed as an endangered species by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The populations increase where there is intense management and the removal of Brown-headed cowbirds, but overall the populations still remain low.

SPECIES PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT STATUS: LE (USDI, FWS 1987), without critical habitat [C1 USDI, FWS 1985]

STATE STATUS: None

OTHER STATUS: Forest Service Sensitive (USDA, FS Region 3 1999)
Listed Threatened (Secretaría de Medio Ambiente 2000)

MANAGEMENT FACTORS: For the Black-capped Vireo to succeed as a population, there must be a decrease in habitat destruction through development, agriculture and grazing, and cowbirds parasitism. Fire management should also be considered with this species as they do very well in areas that have been burned.

PROTECTIVE MEASURES TAKEN: A National Wildlife Refuge, near Austin is being established. Also the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan has been proposed in order to maintain a viable population of this species in the area.

SUGGESTED PROJECTS: More study into the conservation of this species is needed.

LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP:

SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

REFERENCES:

American Ornithologists' Union. 1957. Check-List of North American Birds. American Ornithologists' Union, Baltimore, Maryland, pp. 466.

Baicich, P.J. 1997. A Guide to the Nests, Eggs, and Nestlings of North American Birds. Natural World Academic Press, New York, New York, pp.267.

Black-capped Vireo. Available: http://www.unep-wcmc.org/species/data/species_sheets/blcvireo.htm.

Corman, Troy. 2002. Pers. Comm. pg. 1.

Davis, W.A. 1990. Birds in Southeastern Arizona. Tucson Audubon Society, Tucson, Arizona, p. 120.

Drake, J. 2000. Available: [http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/accounts/vireo/v._atricapillus\\$narrative.html](http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/accounts/vireo/v._atricapillus$narrative.html).

- Ehrlich, P.R. 1988. The Birder's Handbook: A Field Guide to the Natural History of North American Birds. Simon & Schuster, New York, New York, p.490.
- Grzybowski, J.A. 1995. Black-capped Vireo (*Vireo atricapillus*). In the Birds of North America, No. 181 (A. Poole and F. Gill, eds.). The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, and The American Ornithologists' Union, Washington, D.C.
[Http://www.avesphoto.com/website/pictures/VIRBCP-1.jpg](http://www.avesphoto.com/website/pictures/VIRBCP-1.jpg).
[Http://www.rw.ttu.edu/sp_accounts/bcvireo/bcvireo_rangedist.htm](http://www.rw.ttu.edu/sp_accounts/bcvireo/bcvireo_rangedist.htm).
- Lasley, G. 1996. Available: <http://home.earthlink.net/~glasley/bcvireo.html>.
- National Geographic. 1999. Field Guide to the Birds of North America. Third Edition. National Geographic Society, Washington D.C. pp. 307.
- NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. 2001. Version 1.6. Arlington, Virginia, USA: NatureServe. Available: <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. (Accessed: December 31, 2003).
- Secretaría de Medio Ambiente. 2000. Diario Oficial de la Federacion, PROY-NOM-059- ECOL-2000. p.35.
- Sibley, D.A. 2000. The Sibley Guide to Birds. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, New York, pp.346.
- Terres, J.K. 1980. The Audubon Society. Encyclopedia of North American Birds. Alfred A. Knopf. p.950-955.
- Texas Parks and Wildlife. Threatened and Endangered Species, Black-capped Vireo. Accessed 2002, <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/nature/endang/birds/bcv.jtm>.
- USDA, Forest Service Region 3. 1999. Regional Forester's Sensitive Species List.
- USDI, Fish and Wildlife Service. 1985. Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Review of Vertebrate Wildlife; Notice of Review. Federal Register 50(181):37964.
- USDI, Fish and Wildlife Service. 1987. Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Review of Vertebrate Wildlife; Notice of Review. Federal Register 52:37420/37423.
- Woodhouse, 1852. Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Volume 6 number 2, p. 60.

MAJOR KNOWLEDGEABLE INDIVIDUALS:**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

Revised: 2002-03-12 (AMS)
2004-01-05 (AMS)

To the user of this abstract: you may use the entire abstract or any part of it. We do request, however, that if you make use of this abstract in plans, reports, publications, etc. that you credit the Arizona Game and Fish Department. Please use the following citation:

Arizona Game and Fish Department. 20XX (= year of last revision as indicated at end of abstract). X...X (=taxon of animal or plant). Unpublished abstract compiled and edited by the Heritage Data Management System, Arizona Game and Fish Department,

Phoenix, AZ. X pp.

bioRxiv preprint doi: <https://doi.org/10.1101/2021.03.10.434811>; this version posted March 11, 2021. The copyright holder for this preprint (which was not certified by peer review) is the author/funder, who has granted bioRxiv a license to display the preprint in perpetuity. It is made available under aCC-BY 4.0 International license.