

Blue-headed Vireo *Vireo solitarius*

The Blue-headed Vireo breeds east of the Rocky Mountains and reaches California primarily as a fall vagrant. Its reclassification as a species distinct from the Cassin's and Plumbeous Vireos has attracted birders' attention to it, but it is at least as rare here as birds with a similar breeding range, such as the Philadelphia Vireo.

Migration: Of San Diego County's 13 records of the Blue-headed Vireo, 12 are for fall, from 15 September (1991, Point Loma, S. Mlodinow, AB 46:151, 1991) to 10 November (Point Loma, AB 35:227, 1980). All fall records are from Point Loma except for three from the Tijuana River valley in the 1970s.

Winter: The single winter record is of one in San Diego 16 January–22 March 1987 (J. L. Dunn, AB 41:331, 1987). The Blue-headed Vireo winters at the latitude of San Diego in the southeastern United States, so further winter records here should be expected.



Photo by Anthony Mercieca

Taxonomy: *Vireo s. solitarius* (Wilson, 1810), smaller and greener backed than the Appalachian *V. s. alticola*, is undoubtedly the subspecies reaching California; the only specimen (San Nicolas Island, SDNHM 38562) is this. But the Blue-headed Vireo has not yet been collected or even photographed in San Diego County.