

## AGE RATIO REPORT ON RED-EYED VIREOS - SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER 1969

By Harriet Marsi

I live in the Southern Tier section of New York State on 50 acres of former farmland. I band on a hillside sloped at approximately a 12 degree angle. This was former pasture land and is now almost completely overgrown by thornapple - the largest of which are approximately 12 feet high. My nets are strung in a straight line along the contour of the hill about 75 feet above a farm pond. I string five nets each 60 ft. by 7 ft.

During the fall of 1969 I had an opportunity to do a great deal more banding than I have done in previous years. During September and October I had my nets up 30 mornings from approximately 6 a.m. to approximately 10 a.m. As a result I banded a total of 72 red-eyed vireos. Of these 68 - or approximately 94% - were immature birds. Of the four adults netted three were caught during the first two weeks of September. The fourth was banded September 19th. Since red-eyed vireos nest here there is the possibility that these birds may have been here all summer.

In all cases ageing was done by eye coloration. Often this was substantiated by checking skull ossification, although as the weather became colder this was done less frequently.

The following chart shows the distribution by weeks.

	DATE	HY	AHY	TOTAL	TIMES NETS WERE UP
Sept	1-6	4	2	5	3
	7-13	12	1	13	5
	14-20	22	1	23	6
	21-27	12	0	12	5
	28-Oct 4	11	0	11	3
Oct	5-11	5	0	5	2
	12-18	1	0	1	4
	19-25	1	0	1	2
	26-30	0	0	0	0
TOTALS		<u>68</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>30</u>

Realizing that data for one year only is pretty inconclusive, I looked up my records for the five years prior to 1969. Although I do not have large numbers for these years I thought a similar trend might be indicated. The following chart sums up this research:

YEAR	HY	AHY	TOTAL
1964	11	0	11
1965	5	1	6
1966	17	2	19
1967	12	2	14
1968	<u>20</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>21</u>
TOTAL	65	6	71

Thus of 71 red-eyed vireos banded during the fall migrations of 1964 through 1968, 65 or somewhat under 92% were immature birds. I think this supports the trend observed in 1969.

The obvious conclusion one might draw from these figures is that immature red-eyed vireos migrate through this area in the fall largely without adults.

However, it occurs to me that at least one other explanation of the absence of adult birds in my figures might be that adult birds are net-shy - that they are present but I am just not getting them in my nets.

It would be difficult for me to obtain data on this but here is where other banders can help. Are other banders in my area getting both adult and immature red-eyed vireos during all migrations or do their figures support mine? Are other banders elsewhere - perhaps along the coast - getting a large percentage of adults? a mixture? or results like mine? Do other banders have explanations I have not thought of for my figures? I would appreciate comparisons.

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