Fla. Field Nat. 10(1): 22, 1982.

A Thick-billed Vireo sighting for Everglades National Park.—On 28 December 1980, during the Coot Bay Christmas Bird Count in Everglades National Park, Monroe County, Florida, William Matthews, Jr., and I briefly saw at 15 m a bird with White-eyed Vireo (Vireo griseus) features but with a yellow throat, breast, and belly. We identified it as a Thick-billed Vireo (Vireo crassirostris), the fourth sighting for the species in Florida. This bird was found in a buttonwood (Conocarpus erecta) strand about 400 m north of the intersection of the old Homestead Canal, Rowdy Bend Trail, and the main park road. The reporting of this bird started a stampede of observers that created a well worn path through the coastal prairie of Salicornia bordering the strand to the east.

Dut to the presence of some bright-colored immature White-eyed Vireos in the area and because of an absence of a specimen or photograph for this species in Florida, comments of some other observers seem warranted. After seeing this bird, Charles Geanangel wrote (in litt), "I have seen at least 18 Thick-billed Vireos in the Cayman Islands and this bird fits." On 4 January 1981, Oron L. Bass, Jr., and C. Wesley Biggs studied the bird on two occasions in good light at a distance of 5 m. The vireo bill, dark eye, white wing bars, and completely yellow underparts were well seen by both observers. Their attempts to secure a photograph failed. On 6 January 1981, Larry Peavler, Paul W. Sykes, Jr., and Phil Weinrich studied this bird carefully on three occasions in bright sunlight. Sykes reports (in litt),

The bird, judged to be an adult, was a relatively large vireo with a dark eye and two narrow wing bars. The underparts were completely yellow from the base of the bill to the tail, including the undertail coverts. The upperparts were olive. The yellow throat had a grayish wash. At the U. S. National Museum some years ago, I examined a large series of the races of the White-eyed Vireo occurring in Florida and the Thick-billed Vireo to determine how the two species might best be accurately separated in the field. Of the two species only the Thick-billed Vireo has the yellow throat and complete yellow underparts. The White-eyed Vireo has differing amounts of yellow on the flanks that varies in intensity, but the yellow does not generally meet across the breast and is never on the throat and undertail coverts. In comparison to the White-eyed Vireo, the foraging movements of the Thick-billed Vireo observed in the park were much slower. We double checked these features of plumage and behavior with White-eyed Vireos in the southern part of the park on 6 January.

The three previous sight records of the Thick-billed Vireo in the United States are all from southern Florida: Palm Beach County, Hypoluxo Island, 4 February 1961, first U. S. record (Abramson 1974, Amer. Birds 28: 881-882); Monroe County, Dry Tortugas, Garden Key, 25 April-10 May 1964 (Robertson and Mason 1965, Fla. Nat. 38: 131-138); Palm Beach County, West Palm Beach Christmas Bird Count, 27 December 1968 (Cruickshank 1969, Audubon Field Notes 23: 252-253). Thus three of the four records occurred during the winter, 27 December-4 February, with two from Christmas Bird Counts. The Thick-billed Vireo has an interesting range in the West Indies, occurring in the Bahama Islands south to Ile Tortue and on the Cayman Islands and Old Providence (Bond 1971, Birds of the West Indies, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co.).—Howard P. Langridge, 1421 W. Ocean Ave., Lantana, Florida 33462.