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DISTRIBUTION

First records for the Philadelphia Vireo in Alaska

Ralph R. Moldenhauer and Theodore G. Tobish

THE KNOWN breeding range of the Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*) extends across Canada from New Brunswick, Quebec and southwestern Newfoundland west to central-eastern British Columbia. The northernmost and westernmost breeding records come from the Peace River Parklands in north-central British Columbia (Godfrey 1966). There are no published records for the Yukon Territory (Godfrey, *op. cit.*) or Alaska (Kessel and Gibson 1978). During 1982 this species was observed at two different localities in Alaska.

On June 27, 1982, the song of a Philadelphia Vireo was recorded on tape at Eagle, 20 kilometers west of the Alaska-Yukon border. The bird was in stands of second growth Quaking Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) and Balsam Poplar (*Populus balsamifera*) along the roads and near cabins. There were adjacent grassy-weedy fields.

The bird sang continuously from the upper canopy of the trees. Moldenhauer watched it for about an hour and recorded its song with a Uher 4000 reel-to-reel tape recorder fitted with a Dan Gibson parabolic microphone (Texas Bird Sound

Library #58-10; copy at University of Alaska Museum). Playback of the songs brought the vireo to within four meters, where the light eye stripe, the lack of wing bars, and the yellowish breast were observed in good light with 7 × 35 mm binoculars. Eventually a second bird in similar plumage approached the area and was chased by the first bird. The taped songs were analyzed independently by Jon C. Barlow (Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto) and Donald J. Borror (Borror Bioacoustics Laboratory, Ohio State University) and verified as *Vireo philadelphicus*. On subsequent days, attempts to locate the bird were unsuccessful.

On September 14, 1982, a second Philadelphia Vireo was discovered by Tobish on Middleton Island in the northern Gulf of Alaska, about 113 kilometers south of nearest mainland and 129 kilometers south-southwest of Cordova. This bird was observed for about six minutes at less than 10 meters, foraging slowly and deliberately along branches of willow thickets. Dense thickets, mostly of *Salix* and *Rubus*, are the primary passerine habitat on Middleton Island. The bird was loosely associated with Orange-

crowned Warblers (*Vermivora celata*) and Yellow Warblers (*Dendroica petechia*). Detailed field descriptions of the bird are on file at the University of Alaska Museum.

These sightings extend the known occurrence of the species some 1450 kilometers to the northwest and west. Kessel and Gibson (1978) suggest that many Alaska accidental or casual species are those that during migration "overshoot" their normal breeding ranges located in the interior of Canada. This may be the case for the Philadelphia Vireos at Eagle, Alaska.

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