

RARE OR UNUSUAL RECORD

NEW STATE RECORD

ACCEPTED

REJECTED

5/11/76

Species: GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH
(Vernacular Name)

Catharus minimus
(Scientific Name-use binomial)

Date(s): May 16, 1976 Time Bird Seen: About 11 AM to

Locality: Barr Lake State Park

Nearest Town: Brighton County: Adams

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
Several other people (on DFO trip) saw the bird, but I do not believe they saw it very well.		

Optical Equipment: 10 X 50 binoculars

If photographed, type of equipment used:

Light Conditions: Bird in sun part of the time, in shade part of the time

Distance from bird (how measured): Minimum estimated distance-10 feet

Number of Birds Seen: 1 Sex: ? Plumage: Typical

Describe the bird's overall behavior and demeanor:

The bird behaved in typical thrush manner, spending most of its time feeding on the ground or in low branches, several times flying up into the cottonwood and sitting on a branch, as much as 35 feet above the ground. A Wood Thrush and several Swainson's Thrushes were in the area and were compared directly.

Describe in great detail the bird's size, overall shape, plumage and color-pattern. Include details on shape of bill, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to the marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance in field guide descriptions is not enough. Describe what you actually saw in the field:

A typical thrush, of generally average proportions (robin-like but smaller in total body length), bill of average length (pale in color), tail average in length, slightly forked. Forehead, crown, nape, back, wings, rump and uppertail dull brownish-olive, unmarked. Cheek gray, but not strongly contrasting with browner head and not conspicuous or even noticeable at a great length. A very thin and inconspicuous whitish (not white) eyering. Throat, breast, belly, sides, flanks and undertail coverts whitish, with a fairly strong malar stripe (actually a series of spots that appeared to be almost connected), roundish, brownish-black spots on breast. Legs pinkish, eyes dark. Underwings and underside of tail not seen.

Describe the bird's song or call, if heard, including method of delivery, i.e., from perch, in flight, etc:

No song or call heard.

Describe the habitat in which you observed this bird:

Cottonwood-willow growth bordering large plains irrigation reservoir.

How were similarly appearing species eliminated?

Wood Thrush-easily eliminated because it is larger, very fufous and with large spots on breast.

Hermit Thrush-Also easily eliminated because it has a rufous rump and tail that contrasts with brown back.

Swainson's Thrush-The most similar species. Typical Swainson's has much buffy color on throat and breast and a wide buffy eyering. Several were in the ~~same~~ area and were directly compared. Rarely, Swainson's may lack largely or totally the buffy color and then look very similar to Gray-cheeked, but differ in that the cheeks are brown as are the crown and nape; an eyering, although not buffy and usually less wide as in a typical Swainson's, is still wider and whiter than in a Graycheek; the malar stripe is less conspicuous than in a Graycheek; breast spots are more numerous, darker and more clearly defined (less blufry) than in the Graycheek.

Veery-Easily eliminated due to lack of uniform reddish upperparts.

Prior experience with this and similarly appearing species:

Have seen Wood Thrush several times, including twice in Colorado.

Have seen many Hermit And Swainson's Thrushes in Colorado, in migration and in the summer in the mountains.

Have seen Gray-cheeked Thrush once before (at Bonny Res. on May 11, 1976).

Have seen Veery a number of times in migration in Colorado.

Books, illustrations and advice consulted and how did these influence this documentation?

The standard field guides were consulted afterward and supported the identification.

This report was written from notes made during ___ after X observation; from memory ___

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