

## COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSHCatharus minimusLocation: Willow Creek; Lamar, Prowers County, ColoradoDate: May 1, 1993Setting:

Stephen Addinall and I found this bird about 4:00 p.m. on May 1. We called over to Joe Roller and Brandon Percival who also saw it. The total observation period was less than 10 minutes. We all saw it with our binoculars, at a height of 2-6 feet above the ground at a distance of about 25 feet. The weather was overcast with dull grey light. Stephen and I first saw the bird fly up from the ground and perch in a Russian Olive. It flew back to the ground and hopped along at the edge of a marsh and then back up into the trees again. It perched quite still at one point and allowed prolonged views at angles from the side and rear. This bird did not flick wings or tail.

Description:

The bird was an adult *Catharus* thrush, about 7-8" long with a spotted breast. The most striking feature was the plainness of the bird. It had no eyering. The upperparts were a dull grey-brown with a concolor head, back, wing, rump and tail. It clearly did not have the slightly redder rump and tail of the Hermit Thrush, a feature that we commented on as we observed. The wings were the same color as the rest of the upperparts. The tail was rather short. The face was remarkably plain dark grey, showing no contrast with the rest of the head and upperparts. This concolor head and face, being all grey and lacking an eyering, was something that we discussed together as we viewed the bird. The undersides were whitish with extensive, distinct, smudgy dark grey spots. There was a slight buffy tinge to the sides of the breast.

Similar Species:

Wood Thrush is larger, richer brown with a distinct eyering and large distinct spots on the breast. The Veery is richer brown, has a lighter face, contrasting with the crown and has very light, indistinct spotting on the breast. Swainson's Thrush has a buffy face and an eyering. Hermit Thrush has an eyering, a contrasting reddish rump and tail and flicks its wings.

At this same woods and earlier in the day we had seen both Hermit and Swainson's thrushes and were able to see the buff and reddish tones of both species under the same light conditions.

Experience with Species:

I have seen all the *Catharus* thrushes in Colorado, including two Gray-cheeked Thrushes in May. I have also seen Gray-cheeked Thrushes in spring migration in Texas.

This report was prepared from notes made at the time of observation.



Mark Janos  
10 Sedum Ct.  
Pueblo, CO 81001

## Colorado Field Ornithologists - Sight Record Form

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- New State Record-----  
- X - Rare bird in CO  
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Gray-cheeked Thrush  
(Species)-----  
Catharus minimus  
(Scientific name)  
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## Date(s):

May 1, 1993 6:10-6:20 PM 5 minutes  
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## Locality:

Lamar Community College in the woods, Lamar, Prowers County.  
(Nearest town, county and state)  
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## Optical equipment:

10X40 Bausch & Lomb Custom Binoculars  
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If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used:

Not Photographed  
-----Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: unknown Plumage: adult  
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## Light Conditions:

excellent  
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## Distance from bird and how measured:

20-30 feet  
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## Describe the bird's overall behavior:

The bird was seen always low to the ground and on the ground. Only once it was 4 feet above the ground.  
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## Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

The bird was seen in trees low to the ground, it was sitting on a log on top of the water, a marsh with cattail surrounded it.  
-----Other observers who independently identified the bird  
(Please list names and address):Mark Janos 10 Sedum Court Pueblo, Colorado 81001  
Dr. Joe Roller 13040 W 16th Drive, Golden, Colorado 80401  
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Describe in great detail the bird which you saw. The field marks used to identify the bird. Include Size, overall

shape, plumage, and color pattern; details on shape of bill, wings, and tail.:

I identified the thrush by it's thrush shape and size. It's gray appearance overall. Gray color near the eye and gray tail. The bird's size was about 7 inches. Larger than the warblers by two inches. The shape was typical thrush shaped. The bird was in adult plumaged. The color pattern is as follows: All over brownish gray color. The bill was short and two-toned, the lower mandible was light with dark at the tip of the bill, the upper mandible was dark. The face around the eye was gray lighter than the rest of the birds head, back, wings and tail. The eye was dark and had no eye-ring. The head was brownish gray darker than face. The back was grayish-brown, the wings were also grayish brown. The tail was gray lighter than the back, wings and head. The throat and breast were white with black spots. The flanks were light brownish gray. The underparts all white. The undertail coverts were white. The legs and feet were a dark pink color. The bill was short and typical thrush like. The wings were typical thrush like and the tail was round at the end, and fairly short for a thrush.

Describe the bird's calls or sounds if heard:

No sounds heard.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

Veery: This species is reddish on the back and tail.

Swainson's Thrush: This species has buffy eye-rings.

Hermit Thrush: This species has a red tail.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

This is my first Gray-cheeked Thrush.

I've seen many Swainson's & Hermit Thrush in CO and Hermit also in AZ.

I've seen 2 Veery in CO.

Field Guides used to determine sighting:

National Geographic Society's Bird's of North America

This report was written from notes made during \_\_\_\_\_ after X;  
from memory \_\_\_\_\_.

Name: Brandon K. Percival

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Pueblo West, Colorado 81007-2604

(719)-547-3722

Signature: *Brandon K. Percival*

Return form to: Bill Prather

C.F.O. Official Records Committee

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