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COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH
Catharus minimus

Location: Willow Creek behind Lamar Community College; Prowers County; Lamar, Colorado

Date: May 12, 1996

Setting:

I was birding the woods behind Lamar Community College around 2:00 p.m. with Brandon Percival. I found the thrush when I was off by myself and observed it alone for about two minutes. I observed the bird from as close as 25 feet with B & L 10 x 40 binoculars.

Description:

This bird was an adult Catharus thrush -- approximately 7-8" long, plain above, no wing bars, spotted breast, short tail, and stout, straight bill. The bird was overall one color on the uppersides, including the wings, from head to tail. The color of the upperparts was grayish-brown, a little grayer and colder looking than a Swainson's Thrush. Unlike Hermit Thrushes, this bird's tail and rump were clearly not redder, nor browner than the rest of the upperparts. The face was very plain, flat gray, showing no contrast with the rest of the head and upperparts. There was neither an eyering nor any suggestion of paler lores, nor was there buffy on the face. The undersides were white with clear, dark gray spots, more distinctly spotted than Swainson's Thrush. I did not observe any buffy tones to the sides of the grayish breast and flanks.

Similar Species:

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

Experience with Species:

I have seen all the Catharus thrushes in Colorado. I have also seen Gray-cheeked Thrushes in spring migration in Texas.

This report was prepared from memory.

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