

Species: Louisiana Waterthrush Seiurus motacilla
 (Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name-use binomial)

Date(s): 6/11 and 6/12 1975 Time Bird Seen: 7:00 AM to 7:15 AM
 Locality: Cottonwood Canyon 61° 57' 00" 7.15 AM
 Nearest Town: None County: San Juan

Other observers who independently identified this bird:
 NAME ADDRESS TELEPHONE
None

Optical Equipment: None
 If photographed, type of equipment used: _____
 Light Conditions: Strong sunlight
 Distance from bird (how measured): 20 ft from tree at up 15 ft

Number of Birds Seen: 1 Sex: ♂ Singing Plummage: adult

Describe the bird's overall behavior and demeanor:
On 6/11, I saw a bird which resembled a water thrush or an ovenbird, bobbing as it walked. I quickly looked at its head because I had seen an ovenbird - that being apt since it didn't have a ventral patch. As it flew I decided it must have been a northern water thrush.

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:

Copy from field notes
 "The warbler I ^{had} heard 6/11 began to sing at about 7 AM after I had been in the area about 15 minutes. Some song as I had heard 6/11. Found a bird singing about 20 ft up 15 ft facing me - a water thrush. This bird had a strong white eye line - streaked breast. I took special note of white throat which had no apparent streaking. Was impressed by the unlike warbler bill: strong and long."

Bird was facing me so I could not see tail or wings. And after it ceased it didn't sing again so didn't find it again. On 6/12 I did think I might have seen it again.

(OVER)

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

After seeing the bird on 6/1. I heard a bird down then but on the trees. It wasn't the song of the northern waterthrush - the song wasn't nearly as explosive & I really thought it was another warbler - not a high-pitched and then singing. The song was a bit like a high-pitched warbler, but did not have a sharp note preceding the descending phrase. The next day I saw the waterthrush singing the same song.

Describe the habitat in which you observed this bird:

Which underbrush beside a spring-fed stream - This stream had the most lush vegetation (mosses etc) among the other streams in the area.

How were similarly appearing species eliminated?

2. Northern waterthrush

- a. Had white unstriped throat, strong white line over eye
- b. Song wasn't explosive, more measured
- c. Song comprised of ^{that sound} the strong, long bell could belong to a warbler.

Prior experience with this and similarly appearing species:

I am familiar with *Geothlypis trichas* in Wisconsin - and have seen numerous northern waterthrushes. I have seen *Geothlypis trichas* in its past but can't distinctly remember when.

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

Peterson, Field Guide to Western Birds

Robbins, Birds of the World - did refer to the latter white appearance of the bird.

This report was written from notes made during just after x observation; from memory _____

PRINT NAME: Louis E. Webster SIGNATURE: Louis E. Webster DATE: 7/31/11
Street Address: 780 Greenwood Town and State: Aurora, Colo ZIP: 80016

Return to: JACK REDDALL - 4450 South Alton Street, Englewood, Colorado 80110

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH - - - - Seiurus motacilla

The CFO Official Records Committee has reviewed a written report supporting the occurrence of a Louisiana Waterthrush in Cottonwood Canyon, Baca County on June 1 and 2, 1975. After evaluating the documentation submitted by the observer, Lois E. Webster of Aurora, the Committee ruled to accept this report and add the Louisiana Waterthrush to the Official State List of the Birds of Colorado.

The observer reported as follows: "On June 1, I saw a bird which resembled a Waterthrush or an Ovenbird bobbing as it walked. I quickly looked at its head because I had seen an Ovenbird in that same spot earlier. Since it didn't have a rusty cap and it flew, I decided it must have been a Northern Waterthrush."

From her field notes: "The warbler I heard on June 1 began to sing about 7 A.M. after I had been in the area about fifteen minutes. Same song as I heard on June 1. Found bird singing about twenty feet up facing me - a Waterthrush. This bird had a strong white eye line - streaked breast. I took special note of the white throat which had no apparent streaking. Was impressed by the unlike warbler bill - strong and long."

The observer described the bird's song as follows: ". . . I heard a bird downstream - in the trees. It wasn't the song of the Northern Waterthrush. This song wasn't nearly as explosive. I really thought it was another warbler. It kept moving and then singing. The song resembled the song of the Chestnut-sided Warbler, but did not have as sharp a note preceding the descending phrase. The next day I saw the Waterthrush singing the same song."

Chairman's comments: Field separation of the two species of Waterthrushes is extremely tricky, particularly in the west. Most of the popular Field Guides tend to overstress certain characteristics (throat spotting), incorrectly describe others (eyeline) and fail to mention such diagnostic features as the flank color. However, the vocalizations of the two species are quite distinctive and herein lay the basis for the Committee's acceptance despite the lack of concrete details describing the bird's appearance. Colorado field observers are urged to acquaint themselves with Dr. Laurence C. Binford's treatise on "Identification of Northern and Louisiana Waterthrushes" as published in California Birds (now Western Birds), Volume 2, Number 1, pages 1-10.

January 14, 1976

Jack Reddall

CHAIRMAN
CFO Official Records Committee