

VERIFICATION OF UNUSUAL SIGHT RECORD FOR UTAH

Bird name (common & scientific): Bendire's thrasher (Toxostoma bendirei)

Date & time of sighting: 22 May 93, 7:45 - 8:00 PM

Length of time observed: on/off, resulting in 5 - 10 minutes of actual viewing

Number of birds observed: 2

Age & Sex: adults

Latitude/longitude: 37° 00' N, 113° 55' W (By Hwy 56 just north of Arizona)

Elevation: ?

Distance to bird: ~ 100 feet while perched, closer in flight

Light conditions: excellent: early evening (1 hr before sunset), with sun mostly behind us

Optical equipment: 10 x 40 Bausch & Lomb Custom binoculars

Weather: sunny, clear sky, slight breeze

Description of bird:

- Thrasher shape. More stocky than mockingbird.
- Light sandy brown all over, being lighter below. No obvious marks on body. No white wing patches or bars, nor on tail. When perched, the wing edge contrasted with the rest of the body, being slightly paler, almost a straw color.
- Buffy vent.
- Either completely unstreaked breast or only very vague streaking. Slight "streaks" may have actually been due to breeze lifting up unstreaked feathers, giving dark appearance.
- Very slight malar stripes down pale throat. No other obvious face markings.
- Black bill seemed longer than mockingbird but much shorter than LeConte's or Curve-billed thrashers. Bill slightly downcurved near end, but nearly straight.
- Pale eye.

Voice or call notes and method of delivery: Rich song, just as recorded in Peterson's tapes of *Western Bird Songs*

Behavior: Perched in top of Joshua tree, singing, with a posture more vertical than shown in *Peterson's*. Flight across road somewhat labored/stiff, Crissal thrasher-like.

Habitat: Joshua tree, cholla, creasote brush Mojave environment. Alluvial fan in valley bottom

Similar species and how these were eliminated:

- Mockingbird, immature: The bill was a bit too long, there were no wing patches either in flight or perched, the outer tail feathers were not noticeably white, and the bird was not sleek enough, the song was different (many other mockingbirds were calling nearby)
- LeConte's thrasher: The bill was much too short, the song was different
- Other thrasher's: Unstreaked/vaguely streaked breast, song, bills, light sandy brown color
- Cactus wren: Much larger, not barred or streaked on tail and body, insufficient contrast between upper and lower body, different song

Previous experience with this and similar species:

I've seen other thrashers in Texas and Crissal thrashers, cactus wrens & mockingbirds in area.
Dave Thompson has seen this thrasher in Arizona.

Books, illustrations, and advice consulted, and how these influenced this description:

We had Peterson's western field guide and tapes, allowing us to seek out differentiating field marks. However, we had eliminated all other possibilities (other than thrashers) prior to consulting book & tape.

Significance of record in this area or the state:

not great...

Additional material (drawing, photograph, tape, DNA sample, corpse, etc.): --

Description from:

1. Notes taken at time of sighting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Notes made later (if so, when)	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. From memory	<input type="checkbox"/>

Date this form was prepared: 24 May 1993

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Signature:



Other observers who independently identified this bird:

Dave Thompson

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