

# Bicknell's Thrush

*Catharus bicknelli*

<b>STATUS</b>	Threatened 	Not Listed 
Threatened 	Endangered 	Not Listed 



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## Species Description

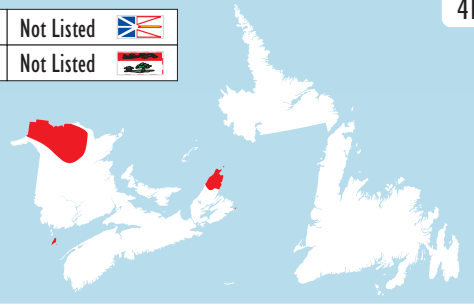
Bicknell's Thrush is a small sparrow-sized songbird (16-18 cm long). It has a buff coloured chest with dark spots, grey to white underparts, an olive-brown back and a chestnut-tinted tail. Its bill is slender and the lower bill is fleshy yellow coloured with black at the tip. Males are slightly larger than females but otherwise similar in appearance.



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Note mostly yellow lower bill

Breeds in forests of higher elevations and a few offshore islands in NB and NS, with an estimated population of about 1000 pairs. Winters in the Caribbean.



## Habitat

Found in high elevation spruce-fir forests in northern New Brunswick, the Cape Breton Highlands and a few offshore islands (St. Paul Island, Grand Manan Island). Typically in areas above 300 meters in stunted, dense forests that are wet, windy and cool.



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Look and listen for the Bicknell's Thrush in high elevation coniferous forests of NB and NS. Its songs and calls can be heard online at [www.bicknellsthrush.org](http://www.bicknellsthrush.org).

## Interesting Points

- One of Canada's rarest and least-known songbirds.
- It was considered a subspecies of the Gray-cheeked Thrush until 1995.
- They are very sensitive birds, and will abandon their nests even with low levels of disturbance.
- Females may have up to four mates, all of which provide food for the young.

## Similar Species

The Swainson's and Hermit Thrush are found in the same breeding habitat as the Bicknell's Thrush, and the Veery and Wood Thrush are occasionally observed in the same areas. These species are often identified by their differing vocalizations.

### Swainson's Thrush:

Buff coloured eye ring, brown tail.



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### Hermit Thrush:

Stronger chestnut-coloured tail, darker black spots on the chest.



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### Wood Thrush:

Boldly spotted on chest, bright white eye ring.



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### Veery:

Reddish back and tail, faint spots on the chest.



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### Gray-cheeked Thrush:

Very similar, larger with less yellow on the lower bill. Uncommon.



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## Threats to Survival

- Habitat loss and fragmentation on breeding grounds from forestry activities, acid rain and atmospheric mercury, ski resort development, recreational use, and transmission tower and wind turbine construction.
- Global warming may alter the abundance of Balsam Fir trees in its current habitat.
- Its wintering ground is threatened by deforestation (from farming, logging, feral pigs and free-ranging cattle).

## How You Can Help

Since 2002, Bird Studies Canada (BSC) has monitored the Bicknell's Thrush in NB and NS through their High Elevation Landbird Program (HELP). Volunteer for this program by contacting BSC at (506) 364-5047. For information on HELP visit: [www.bsc-eoc.org/regional/acbithsurvey.html](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/regional/acbithsurvey.html).

### Contacts, Information, Sighting Reports & Stewardship Opportunities

**Contact:** Environment Canada (506) 364-5044 ext. 5060

**Info:** [www.bicknellsthrush.org](http://www.bicknellsthrush.org)

**Sighting Reports:** [eBird.org](http://eBird.org)

**Stewardship:** [www.bsc-eoc.org](http://www.bsc-eoc.org)



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