



The Brown Thrasher - Georgia State Bird!

The brown thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*) is a captivating bird species known for its rich musical repertoire and striking appearance. Found throughout North America, from southern Canada to Mexico, these medium-sized songbirds are easily recognizable by their warm brown plumage, distinctive streaks, and long, curved bills.

The brown thrasher derives its name from its behavior of "thrashing" through the underbrush while foraging for food. These birds are ground foragers, and their distinctive long bills are used to sweep away leaf litter and debris as they search for insects, spiders, and other prey hiding in the undergrowth. The vigorous, thrashing motion of their bills and their adeptness at flipping leaves earned them the name "thrasher." This behavior is a key characteristic associated with their feeding habits, and it reflects their preference for dense vegetation and shrubbery where they can efficiently hunt for a variety of food sources.

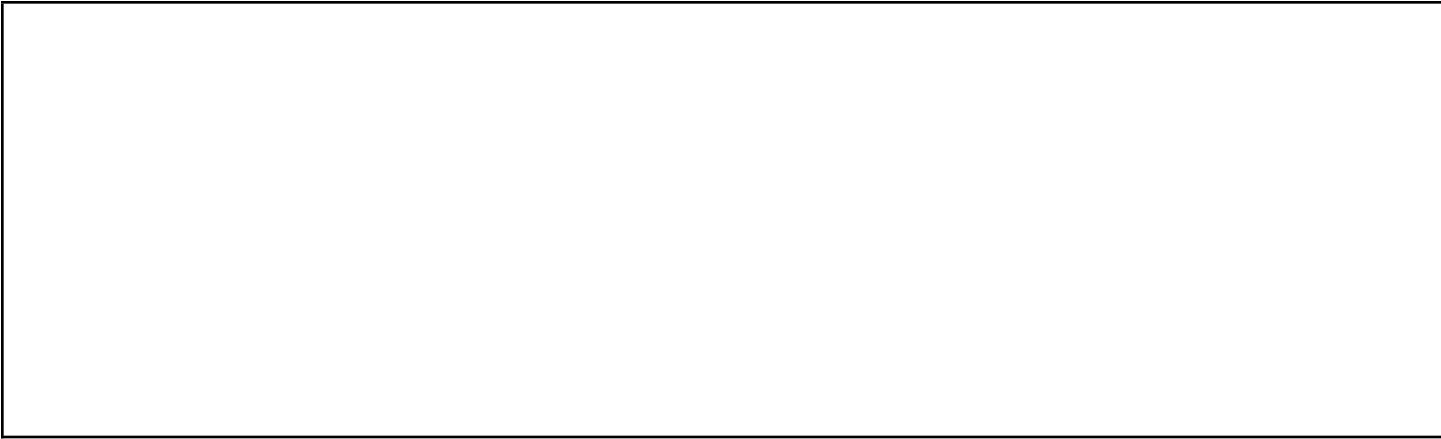
One of the most remarkable features of the brown thrasher is its singing ability. With a repertoire that can include over 1,000 different song variations, these birds are skilled mimics and often incorporate the sounds of other bird species, animals, and even mechanical noises into their songs. Their melodious tunes, typically delivered from elevated perches, contribute to the charm of the bird-rich environments they inhabit.

Brown thrashers are primarily ground foragers, using their long bills to probe the leaf litter for insects, spiders, and other small invertebrates. They also have a fondness for fruits and berries, making them omnivores with a diverse diet. Their preference for dense shrubbery and undergrowth provides them with ample cover while hunting for food.

In terms of physical appearance, the brown thrasher boasts a rufous or reddish-brown upper plumage, with distinctive streaks on its white underparts. The bird's eyes are a bright yellow, and its long tail adds to its overall elegance. Despite their striking appearance, brown thrashers are well-camouflaged in their natural habitats, which include woodlands, thickets, and suburban gardens.

Breeding season for brown thrashers typically begins in late spring, with both male and female participating in nest-building. The female lays a clutch of eggs in a well-concealed location, usually low in a shrub or bush. Both parents take turns incubating the eggs and feeding the nestlings once they hatch.

1.) Design the perfect habitat for a brown thrasher



Draw a brown thrasher in the first box, and then design a new state flag with the brown thrasher as the focus in the second box.

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Why do you think Georgia chose the brown thrasher as its state bird? Do you think it was a good choice?

What is the most interesting fact you learned about the brown thrasher?