



years back dealing with hybrids of this species (with Rose-breasted). Since I couldn't find it, and since this bird was obviously at least part Black-headed Grosbeak, I think I'll go with it. Nice description. I assume the original photo showed more detail than the photocopy - thus the A-P vote.

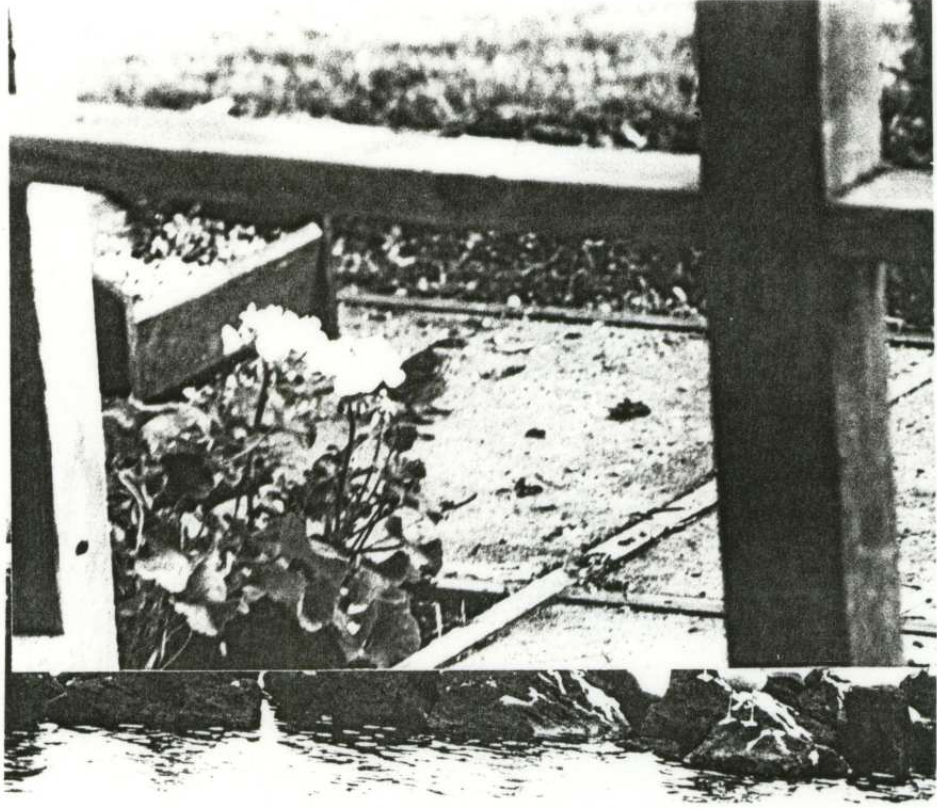
NA: From the written description I can not determine if the bird is an immature Rose-breasted Grosbeak or a female Black-headed Grosbeak. The description of the vivid white line above the eye seems to fit Rose-breasted better than Black-headed, and the most diagnostic field mark the lemon-yellow wing linings were not noted.

NA: This could very easily be a hybrid Rose-breasted X Black-headed Grosbeak. Given the description as written I can not completely rule out female Rose-breasted, especially considering what appears to be fairly heavy streaking on the breast, sides and belly with a light, probably not buff, coloration. Photo does not conclusively show a Black-headed Grosbeak. Most of the time the differences between Rose-breasted and Black-headed Grosbeaks are very small and hard to discern. I can not beyond reasonable doubt say that the bird described is a Black-headed Grosbeak.

A-D: With the arrival of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks in Iowa around May 1, in general, a bird seen May 22 in Iowa shouldn't be a juvenile bird yet with the incubation of Black-headed Grosbeak at 12-13 days and the days until fledging at 11-12 days. The Rose-breasted Grosbeak is about the same time span. I believe a female Black-headed Grosbeak is denoted from the description of black on cheeks or side of head, an orange-streaked crown, an orange upper breast, and streaking along the side and belly of the lower breast. I couldn't tell details from the photo and the xerox copy of the photo to aid in my determination.



90.17



## BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD.

1. Species Black Headed Grosbeak (female) 2. Number: 1
3. Location 1031 H. Ave. Nevada, Iowa 50201
4. Date: May 21 and 22 1990 5. Time Bird seen: 6:00 P.M. and to 7:00 A.M.
6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):  
 A Grosbeak type bird was seen at my squirrel & bird feeders eating kernels of corn. The bird was approximately robin size if not slightly smaller. The upper and lower mandible was very stout. The head was black on the cheeks or side with a vivid white streak above the eyes. Crown or top of head was light orange streaked. Throat was white turning to orange with streaks on the upper breast a little like a juvenile robin's breast. The lower breast was light with dark streaks along the side and belly. A white wing bar appeared along the upper part of the wing. There was also white streaks on the upper wing coverts near the back edge of the wing. The toes and tarsus were gray.
7. Description of voice, if heard: I did not hear the bird sing
8. Description of behavior: Fed on the ground and the feeder that seen in the picture. The bird fed on small pieces of corn. Sort of cocked its head to the side. The lower breast was light with brown or black streaks along the side.
9. Habitat - general:  
 specific:
10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8, Explain:  
 The fact this bird was sighted on May 21 and 22 makes it very unlikely an immature Rose breasted Grosbeak. The red patch shown on the shoulder of an immature Grosbeak was not observed. The breast on the bird observed was not as spotted or streaked as shown on the female rosebreasted Grosbeak.
11. Distance (how measured)? Twenty feet
12. Optical equipment: 35 mm  
 with a Vivitar 75-250mm 1:3.8-4.5 Macro Focusing Zoom lens.
13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you): The picture was taken about 7:00 A.M. The sun would have been in the lower eastern sky. The bird was facing east.
14. Previous experience with this, species and similarly appearing species: I have been a bird watcher for approximately twenty seven years. I have seen rosebreast Grosbeaks on several occasions. This bird appeared different.
15. Other observers: Wife
16. Did the others agree with your identification?
17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:
18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:  
Birds of North America. A field guide to the birds. I tried to use the picture enclosed and my memory as possible to describe this bird.
19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? About eight days. I was waiting for a form to fill out.

Bill W. Abbott Address: 1031 H. Ave.

Signature

Date: May 30, 1990 Nevada City, State: Iowa