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Birds of New Zealand - Locality Guide. 3rd edn.

Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.

Song thrush: pp 234-235.



SONG THRUSH

Family Muscicapidae

Species *Turdus philomelos*

Common name Song Thrush

Status Introduced

Abundance Common

Size 230 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm, Blackbird 250 mm)

Habitat Lives in any vegetated area from the suburban garden to hedged rural areas, exotic plantations and to the edges of native forest. Does not penetrate as deeply into native forest as the Blackbird.

Worldwide range Europe through to Asia.

New Zealand range Found throughout New Zealand and the offshore islands.

Description

Upperparts Olive-brown. **Underparts** White, speckled with brown. **Bill** Brown, with a speck of yellow at the gape.

Conspicuous feature

- Breast streaking.

Conspicuous characteristics

- Feeds mainly on the ground where it takes worms, snails and insects.
- Hops when feeding rather than walks.
- Often heard breaking snails on hard surfaces.
- Will turn head to ground as if listening when feeding.
- Note that the female Blackbird, which is of brownish colouring, is sometimes mistaken for the Song Thrush.

Call Male birds start singing in the north at the end of April and continue through until January. Their song is often confused with that of the Blackbird. However, whereas the Blackbird sings in short phrases of a variety of notes, the Song Thrush repeats the same note forming brackets, which it runs into the next bracket without a pause.

Nest A large bulky cup is made of grasses, twigs and moss, bound with some mud and lined with mud. It is usually two to three metres above the ground. Up to 4 greenish, black-spotted eggs are laid.

Where to find

Common in most places away from native forests.