

## Gynandromorph: Spectacular bird found with male plumage on one side and female on the other

Split down the middle, with one side flaunting yellow 'wing pits', and the other side rocking a pink underwing, researchers say this spectacular-looking songbird is one for the record books.

While we can't be sure without a blood test or an autopsy, the team says this rose-breasted grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) is probably the product of a genetic anomaly known as bilateral gynandromorphy, [one we've seen in birds before](#).

Unlike true hermaphroditism, which refers to having both male and female reproductive tissues, gynandromorphs display contrasting sexual characteristics on each side of their body.

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In this case, while one side of the rose-breasted grosbeak [appears genetically female](#), the other side shows all the hallmarks of a genetic male.

Even the backs of its wings and tail show crucial sexual differences, with the left side displaying a browner shade and the right side a blacker one.

If the bird is anything like other gynandromorphs we've found, this left-right division might go for its insides, too, including its brain and its reproductive organs.

"The entire banding team was very excited to see such a rarity up close, and are riding the high of this once-in-a-lifetime experience," [says](#) the program manager Annie Lindsay.

"One of them described it as 'seeing a unicorn' and another described the adrenaline rush of seeing something so remarkable."

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