







666-01-1998

**VARIED THRUSH (*Ixoreus naevius*)**

**Churchill, Allegheny County, PA**

**March 6, 1998**

*by Mike Fialkovich*

After many unsuccessful attempts to see this bird, I finally had the time to spend waiting for it to appear in a suburban yard in Churchill, approximately 10 miles east of Pittsburgh in Allegheny County PA.

I first saw the bird as it flew into the Black Locust trees in the yard of the homeowner where it perched for approximately five minutes. It then dropped to a lower perch and I observed it in good light at a range of approximately 50 feet. It flew off to a spruce tree in a neighbor's yard and reappeared after several minutes, returning to a Black Locust tree in the homeowner's yard. I observed the bird for 15 minutes through 10X binoculars.

**Description:**

- ⇒ The bird showed typical thrush characteristics: plump belly, thin bill, medium size, habit of flicking the tail and sitting motionless with an occasional turn of the head.
- ⇒ The thrush was proportionally similar to an American Robin, slightly smaller with a shorter tail, but larger than any of the *Catharus* thrushes.
- ⇒ Head, back, wings and tail dark gray.
- ⇒ Throat, breast, belly, and sides orange. The throat was brighter than the breast. The orange faded to whitish on the lower belly and undertail coverts. Black mottling was on the lower belly as well.
- ⇒ The throat and breast were separated by a dull grayish band.
- ⇒ Orange supercilium, beginning at the eye and extending back to the nape. The supercilium did not extend in front of the eye. The orange was the same hue as the throat.
- ⇒ The wings showed two orange wingbars, and orange areas in the primaries. The orange was evident while the bird was perched and in flight.
- ⇒ Bill black, long and thin. I don't recall leg color.
- ⇒ The bird called several times. The call was a soft, low, guttural churring.

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Nick,

I hope they have sent in documentation on this bird and all I am doing is supplying a backup report. Have you received data on this bird for PORC?

Varied Thrush, *Ixoreus naevius*

309 Homer Road, Churchill Township, Allegheny County, 4 March 1998

I observed the bird on several occasions over a period of one hour between 9:30 and 10:30 am. The sky was 100% clouds with a light drizzle. Temperature was about 33F with a 4-10 mph wind out of the east.

The Varied Thrush was observed perching on limbs of deciduous trees and feeding, primarily in and under some blue spruce (looking around in branches and probing the ground, apparently looking for insects or worms -- I never saw it catch anything). I took several distant slides of the bird when it perched in a deciduous tree and do not know if they will show much. The roll has not been developed. If any decent pictures turn out, I will forward them to you.

The Varied Thrush was clearly larger than the Dark-eyed Juncos, White-throated Sparrows, White-breasted Nuthatches and Downy Woodpeckers visiting feeders at this location. It was similar in size, if not slightly larger (it may have just puffed up its feathers more due to the cold weather), than American Robins that were also feeding in the area. The beak appeared to be longer and darker than that of an American Robin, but of about the same thickness. The head of the bird was grayish-brown with a pronounced orangish eye line. The throat of the bird was also orange. A grayish "V" was noticeable on the breast and the belly was orange with some faint barring on the sides. The orange color was not as rufous-tinged as that of American Robins breasts. The back of the bird was grayish-brown. The wings were primarily grayish-brown, but there were two noticeable orange wing bars, and orange highlights on the primaries. The tail was also grayish-brown and about as long as a robins. The legs were I would classify the bird as an adult female Varied Thrush.

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# Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

## Voting Tabulation - Round One

Species: Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*)

Date of Sighting: 25 January 1998 to 9 April 1998

Location: CHURCHILL

County: ALLEGHENY

Observer(s): Mike Fialkovich, Mark McConaughy, John Fedak

Date of Submission: 1998

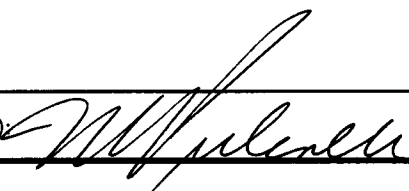
Submitted by: Mike Fialkovich, Mark McConaughy, John Fedak

WRITTEN DESCRIPTION YES PHOTO YES SPECIMEN NO RECORDING NO

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A				Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
D. Couchman	X							
T. Floyd								X
P. Hess	X							
R. Ickes	X							
J. McWilliams	X							
B. Reid			X					
P. Rodewald	X							
TOTALS	5		1					1
DECISION	X							

Comments: 6/0/1

Signature (Secretary):



Date:

1/14/01