
January 1978

First Sighting of Varied Thrush in Florida

Florida Field Naturalist

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Recommended Citation

Florida Field Naturalist (1978) "First Sighting of Varied Thrush in Florida," *Florida Field Naturalist*. Vol. 6 : Iss. 2 , Article 17.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/ffn/vol6/iss2/17>

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A Gray Catbird nest in Duval County, Florida. — Florida nesting records of the Gray Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*) have been reviewed recently (Stevenson 1978, Fla. Field Nat. 6: 13-15). I would like to add this note.

On the morning of 16 June 1977 I saw an adult Gray Catbird with a berry in its bill fly into a hedge at the San Jose Country Club in south Jacksonville, Duval County, Florida. No nest was found in the hedge.

On 20 June I searched the entire area and about 0830 found an adult catbird feeding a fledgling which was barely able to flutter from branch to branch. I returned later in the morning with Virge Markgraf, and although we saw two adult catbirds, we did not see the fledgling.

On 21 June, Sam Grimes and I found an empty nest about 15 m from the thicket in which the fledgling had been seen. The area borders a small lake and is thickly wooded with bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*), wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), black willow (*Salix nigra*), and black cherry (*Prunus serotina*). The nest, which I collected (Jacksonville Univ. Mus.), was about 1.5 m above the ground in a tangle of Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus* sp.), blackberry (*Rubus* sp.), and Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*). Mr. Grimes said the nest was typical of catbird construction. An adult catbird was last seen in the area on 24 June 1977. — MARGARET C. POWELL, 2965 Forest Circle, Jacksonville, Florida 32217.

First sighting of Varied Thrush in Florida. — On 23 October 1977, at approximately 0930, I observed an adult male Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) at Lantana, on Hypoluxo Island, Palm Beach County, Florida. The bird's eyebrows, wingbars, throat and breast were rust-colored and it had a black breast band. The undertail coverts and belly were white, and the legs were yellowish. The upper parts were dark gray, with the crown and forehead darker than the back. The bird closely resembled the illustration of the male in "Birds of North America" (Robbins *et al.* 1966, page 231).

The bird was discovered in a wooded lot of strangler fig (*Ficus aurea*), Australian pine (*Casuarina* sp.), and Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*), with a heavy growth of pepper around the edge. The bird was first seen on the ground but later moved up into the vegetation and disappeared. In about 15 minutes, the author and Ruth Trumpower found the bird again about one m off the ground perched on a limb. It later dropped to the ground where we continued to observe it for about 10 minutes. During its stay in the area it was also seen feeding on lawns of nearby residences.

Later that morning Howard P. Langridge and Paul W. Sykes, Jr. observed the bird and confirmed the identification. It was subsequently seen by many observers and was last reported on 26 October 1977. Robert D. Barber photographed the bird on 24 October (copy to Tall Timbers Research Station).

This appears to be the first report of the Varied Thrush for Florida. It has not been recorded in Alabama (Imhof 1976, Alabama birds, University, Ala., Univ. Alabama Press) or in Georgia (Burlleigh 1958, Georgia birds, Norman, Univ. Oklahoma Press; R. L. Crawford, pers. comm.). During autumn the species occurs regularly in the northeastern United States and southeastern Canada, but records in the southeast (south of Virginia) are lacking (Keith 1968, Bird-Banding 39: 245-276). The A. O. U. check-list (5th Ed., 1957) gives *meruloides* (the easternmost population) as the race occurring casually in eastern North America. However, the subspecies of the individual that visited Hypoluxo Island for four days remains undetermined.

A dry cold front passed through southern Florida on 19 October with no precipitation recorded in Palm Beach County. Fairly heavy rain fell during the night of 22 October and early morning of the 23rd. The rain may have been responsible for temporarily grounding this western thrush on the southeast coast of Florida. — CECIL M. KILMER, Lot 155, 2738 North Military Trail, West Palm Beach, Florida 33409.