

## COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

## VARIED THRUSH

Ixoreus naeviusLocation: My back yard; Pueblo; Pueblo, County, ColoradoDate: October 11, 1996Background:

I was simply going out on my back deck with my mother, who was visiting from Kentucky. My house is in a residential subdivision and the back yard has numbers of medium sized trees around the edge. My yard is lawn. We stepped out into a warm clear afternoon at 2:00 p.m. The Varied Thrush was on my lawn under a Russian Olive tree apparently foraging for fallen olives. It was less than 20 feet away when I stepped onto the deck. There was a very large, loose flock of American Robins (about 100 birds) with which this bird associated. I did not recognize the bird until it startled up onto the corner post of the board fence in my yard. On this perch it was about 5 feet below eye level, about 25 feet away and perched sideways to me. I observed it quite clearly although I did not have binoculars with me. I pointed it out to my mother and we both observed it for about 10 seconds before I went into the house to get my binoculars. Its the same old story... when I returned, the bird had flown down the fence about 30 feet further away but was still perched in sight. I looked at it through my binoculars but the bird immediately flew into the adjoining yard and I was never able to locate it again. This was a very brief sighting of a very distinctive bird at close range.

Description:

Unmistakable, even without binoculars -- it was an adult male in breeding plumage. It was the general size and shape of an American Robin, about 10" long, dark above and orangish below. It was very dark bluish-gray, nearly black, above. It had two very bright, flashy orange wingbars and orange tones in the folded primaries. When it flew up from the ground, to the post, with its back to me it was a flashy bird: black and orange. It had an orange supercilium, bright orange breast and a black breast band.

Similar Species:

Almost none. American Robin lacks the black breast band, orange supercilium and orange wingbars. Townsend's Solitaire is smaller, slimmer, lacks orange.

Experience with Species:

I have seen several Varied Thrushes in the Pacific northwest and have seen three in Colorado.

This report was prepared from notes made after observation.

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