

FIELD NOTES

Varied Thrush at Candor: Following an extreme cold spell at the end of December 1967 and January 1968, a Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) appeared at the feeding station of Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Hull, Water Street, Candor, Tioga County.

On January 8, 1968 the Hulls noticed a strange robin-like bird apparently feeding on cracked corn scattered on the snow near their feeder. The bird appeared to have an indistinct breast band crossing the orange-yellow breast. The orange eye stripe was plainly visible, as was the colorful orange throat. The two wing bars appeared a pale yellow. The mottled underparts and overall appearance of the thrush suggested an immature specimen.



Photograph by Donald Weber

The thrush subsequently appeared daily and was observed by approximately sixty birders from various parts of New York and Pennsylvania, the large picture windows about 60 feet from the feeding area providing an excellent vantage point. It maintained a quite regular feeding schedule and could be expected to appear for its last feeding at about 4 p.m. (except on the Saturday the Hull's livingroom was filled with expectant observers!). During the bitter cold weather, with temperatures ranging from 15° above to sometimes 20° below, the bird fed frequently and appeared to eat only cracked corn, although apples and raisins were provided. The presence of feeding Blue Jays, Cardinals, sparrows, etc. seemed to cause the thrush no concern.

On January 31, after a few days of mild weather, the thrush disappeared and was thought to have departed, but it was observed again on March 4, 5 and 6 at the same place by Don Weber, who was maintaining the feeding station after the Hull's departure for Florida on February 6.

The Hull residence is located on the bank of the Catatonk Creek in the village of Candor. The yard contains scattered apple trees, one of which near the feeder was used by the thrush as a resting place, where it perched quietly for long periods of time. Across the creek an island with heavy growths of thorn apples also provided it with shelter. A large spring flows past the feeding area and the bird was often seen going to the edge of this open water.

A casual check of New York State records for the Varied Thrush indicates 7 downstate records (New York City area) and three upstate records (Watertown; West Glenville, Schenectady Co.; Rensselaer Co.).

Donald Weber and Robert Pantle, Candor, N.Y. 13743