

720 E. First St.
 Storm Lake Iowa 50588
 Nov. 21, 1981

Dear Gladys (Black)

Maybe this winter will be a good one for birders!
 Yesterday morning, Ruth and Phil Thornton (1326 Steegs, Storm Lake) telephoned me to say they had a Varied Thrush in their yard. Ruth was looking out their kitchen window when the bird appeared in a cranberry bush, right by the window, and ate a red berry. I think Ruth almost went into orbit when she saw him, and I almost did the same when she telephoned. The bird was a male with the orange eye stripe, black band across the breast and orange wing bars. Ed and I jumped in the car, went over to Thornton's house, and — you guessed it — the bird had just left! We came back to our house, and it wasn't long before the Thorntons called again. We again jumped in the car and hurried over. This time we succeeded! Both Ed and I saw him very plainly, and there is not the slightest doubt about the identification. Ed took a picture with a 400 mm. lens. He says he had the wrong kind of film in the camera, but hopes it turns out O.K. anyway. The bird would get a berry, and take it to a small patch of weeds in the adjoining yard to eat, or to the sidewalk. He was not scared away very far by an inquisitive squirrel, but was eventually flushed by a car which stopped on the street.

We saw him at 11:45 A.M. Day was overcast with snow flurries earlier. Temp. 22° and wind from NW at 8 mph. The day before we had snow and strong NW winds.

Park Day

[K25 @ \$5.6

@ 1/125

100' away

According to Ruth's record, we saw a Varied Thrush at Bess Strawn's (Storm Lake) in December 1968. Bess reported it stayed on her property for about 5 weeks. I reported this in "Iowa Birdlife". We also saw one at Wilma Johnson's house nearby in Nov. 1972.

Hope you're seeing lots of interesting things.

Sincerely,

Virginia Crocker

Copy To Peter C. Petersen