

California Wildlife Habitat Relationships System
California Department of Fish and Game
California Interagency Wildlife Task Group

VARIED THRUSH

Ixoreus naevius

Family: TURDIDAE
B390

Order: PASSERIFORMES

Class: AVES

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DISTRIBUTION, ABUNDANCE, AND SEASONALITY

Breeds only in dense, coniferous forests of Del Norte, Humboldt, Trinity, and Siskiyou cos. Preferred habitat for breeding is redwood in dense-canopied mature stands, but also breeds in coastal Douglas-fir forests (Grinnell and Miller 1944, Yocom and Harris 1975). Widespread from fall to early spring in low and middle elevation of Cascade Range and Sierra Nevada, and interior lowlands. Also occurs along entire coast in winter, moving downslope with onset of snow or decrease in berry crop. Common most winters but numbers vary widely from year to year (McCaskie et al. 1979, Garrett and Dunn 1981). Numbers in winter augmented by individuals migrating from north of California. Frequents many habitats in winter, including valley foothill hardwood, valley foothill hardwood-conifer, and a variety of coniferous and chaparral habitats. Large numbers occur in lowlands of northwestern California when deep snows drive them out of high, coastal mountain ranges (Yocom and Harris 1975).

SPECIFIC HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

Feeding: Omnivorous; feeds on berries and other fruits, seeds, acorns, insects, earthworms, snails, and other small terrestrial invertebrates. Forages on ground, gleans from shrubs, and picks berries from shrubs while perched or fluttering (Bent 1949).

Cover: Dense, mature coniferous forests with damp, shaded floors provide breeding cover. Dense oak, conifer, other woodland, and chaparral stands provide cover in nonbreeding season.

Reproduction: Usually nests in a small or medium tree in dense and mature, humid coniferous forest. Nest is an open cup on a horizontal branch next to main trunk of tree, usually 1.5-6.1 m (5-20 ft) above ground.

Water: No additional information found. Frequents humid forests.

Pattern: Favors dense and mature, humid, coniferous forest for breeding and feeding in summer. In nonbreeding season, habitats more varied but tend to be similar in amount of ground shading.

SPECIES LIFE HISTORY

Activity Patterns: Yearlong, diurnal activity.

Seasonal Movements/Migration: Resident in extreme northwestern coastal areas; migratory elsewhere. Unpredictable fluctuations in numbers from year to year in nonbreeding season. Migrants arrive from northern U.S. and southern Canada in October or November, and depart March through May (McCaskie et al. 1979, Garrett and Dunn 1981).

Home Range: No data found.

Territory: No information found for breeding season; may form small flocks in winter (Martin 1970).

Reproduction: Breeds from mid-April into early August, with peak in late April and May. Clutch averages 3 eggs, range 2-5. Incubation apparently about 14 days, by female only (Harrison 1978). Young altricial.

Niche: Little life history information available. Aggressive towards other bird species at winter feeding sites (Martin 1970, Ehrlich et al. 1988).

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Life history accounts for species in the California Wildlife Habitat Relationships (CWHR) System were originally published in: Zeiner, D.C., W.F.Laudenslayer, Jr., K.E. Mayer, and M. White, eds. 1988-1990. California's Wildlife. Vol. I-III. California Department of Fish and Game, Sacramento, California. Updates are noted in accounts that have been added or edited since original publication.