

accepted 8/23/75

File No. 5-74-185

Least Bittern

Seen on Sept. 15, 1974 near Fruita, Colo. at approximately 3:00 P.M. It was flushed from a patch of cattails at the edge of a pond.

It flew very weakly, not gaining enough altitude to avoid striking the tops of the cattails as it flew. It flew only about 30 feet before dropping down into cover. It was flushed a second time, at very close range, and flew approximately 75 feet and dropped into another patch of cattails.

In flight, the long neck was held in an S curve, with the head well above the level of the body. The legs dangled much like those of the very common Sora in flight. A black back and large tan or buffy wing patches were very apparent.

A very tiny heron, it appeared to be about the size of a Meadowlark. This small size along with its contrasting coloration, immediately distinguish it from the larger and much darker immature Green Heron.

Edgar Mueh

Dear Jack,

I did not see the bird but it is from our best observer, & consider him completely reliable.

Daniel Estab