

## COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD ☐UNUSUAL RECORD ☒

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Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species: LEAST BITTERN

(Vernacular Name)

Ixobrychus exilis

(Scientific Name)

Date(s): 28 MAY 1983Number of birds seen: 1Sex: -Plumage: -Locality: RIVER BED PONDSElevation: -Nearest town: FORT COLLINSCounty: LARIMERTime(s) observed: 17:30Duration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): 30 SECONDS

Other observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):

PAM LEMMON, 319 PARKER, FORT COLLINS, CO 982-4019

Other observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers)

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):

GOOD LIGHT- SCATTERED CLOUDS- SUN TO OUR BACKS WHEN OBSERVING BITTERNOptical equipment used (e.g. power, types): BINOC - 7x50 POWERDistance, and how measured: ABOUT 15 FEET - AN ESTIMATE - THE BIRD WAS CLOSEIf photographed, type of equipment and film: -Who else photographed the bird? -

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying):

FLUSHED BIRD FROM TYPHA, FLEW 15 FEET AND LANDED IN MORE CATTAILS.  
1 MINUTE LATER BIRD WAS FLUSHED AGAIN - FLEW 10 FEET - LANDED IN THICK CATTAILS.  
THEN WAS MOBBED BY 2 RED-WINGED BLACKBERRIES CHASED IT 50 FEET FURTHER  
INTO ANOTHER DENSE STAND OF TYPHA. ONLY SAW THE BIRD IN FLIGHT.

Describe in detail the bird's relative size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern.

Include details of bill, wing and tail shape. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions and illustrations is not enough. Describe only what you actually observe in the field:

THE BIRD WAS ABOUT 1/3 LARGER THAN THE RED-WINGED BLACKBERRIES WHICH WERE LESS THAN ONE FOOT AWAY, RATHER HEAVY WIDE WINGS WITH ORANGISH SHOULDER PATCHES, BROWN PRIMARIES & SECONDARIES. THE BACK WAS BLACKISH, THE CROWN DARK ALSO. THE FACE WAS A GOLDEN BROWN - W/ A STRAIGHT-POINTED YELLOW BILL. LEGS TRAILING BEHIND TAIL IN FLIGHT - WINGS APPEARED YELLOW. HEAD WAS TUCKED INTO BODY IN FLIGHT.  
BODY IN FLIGHT. SITE, ORANGE COVERS, DARK BACK, & SHAPE WERE USED TO IDENTIFY BIRD.



Description (continued):

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):  
MADE NO SOUND

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird:

RECLAIMED GRAVEL PIT - EAST OF Poudre RIVER - SEEN IN SHALLOW (1 FOOT) Pond  
SURROUNDED BY EMERGENT AQUATIC PLANTS - TYPHA PREVALENTLY - GREEN MATERIAL 2-3' IN HEIGHT.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

A BITERN SHAPED BIRD - TOO SMALL FOR ANY OTHER NORTH AMERICAN ARDEIDAE.  
I SUPPOSE ANOTHER POSSIBILITY MIGHT BE VERGIVER OR CLAPPER RAIL - WRONG  
COLOR PATTERNS - THICK STRAIGHT BILL ALSO.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

MY FIRST TIME SEEING LEAST BITERN - SEEN ALL OTHER N.A. ARDEIDAE,  
AND VERGIVER & CLAPPER RAIL.

List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

- a) at time of observation: CHECKED RUBBINS ET AL. BIRDS OF N. AMERICA. I KNEW WHAT  
IT WAS RIGHT AWAY BUT MADE SURE TO CHECK FOR ALL FIELD MARKS.
- b) after observation: —

This report was written from reports made during \_\_\_\_\_, after observation X from memory \_\_\_\_\_  
Date and time report was written: 28 MAY - 19:30

Reporting observer: PETER PATON Signature: Pete Paton

Address: 902 1/2 REMINGTON, FORT COLLINS, COLO. 80529

All reports will be maintained permanently at the address below:

Return to: CURATOR, DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS  
DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY  
CITY PARK  
DENVER, CO 80205