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Colorado Record No: ~~2000-001~~ 2001-001
Colorado Rare Bird Report Documentation Form

Common Name: Least BitternScientific Name: *Ixobrychus exilis*Numbers Seen: OneDistance: 50 feetLight conditions: Sunny, clear, bird was somewhat back lit.Optical Equipment: Swarovski 8X32.Sex and Age: Adult maleLocation: At the Alamosa Golf Course among wooded ponds.County: Alamosa CountyDate and Time of Observation: May 13, 2001, 0900-0920.

Description of the Bird(s): The bird flew to a shoreline of a small pond surrounded by woody trees. It walked along the shore and then flew into low branches overhanging the pond, about 1 foot above the water. We approached and observed the bird as close as 50 feet.

Bird was coiled in a perching position and we observed features from the right lateral side.

I estimated the bird at 14 inches in length. The bird's face was buff brown with a dark black crown. The eye had a light yellow iris. Bill was long and lance-shaped and slightly trending upward. It was orange colored with the upper mandible slightly darker than lower mandible.

Chin was white down through the throat where it then became buff brown. Breast buff brown. Belly buff brown but changing to white on the lower belly and undertail. Tail was not visible on this perched bird and was hidden under primaries.

Wing primaries were rich buff brown, with greater coverts being light buff brown and median and lesser coverts a greenish black color. It gave the folded wing a three color appearance. Back of bird was dark black.

Legs were light orange to yellow in color.

Habitat: Wooded edge of a small pondBehavior: Saw it fly, walk and perch, but got detailed close look when bird finally perched.Vocalizations: None heardDifferentiation from Similar Species: Not a Green Heron which has a reddish brown neck, green back and dark wings.Previous Experience with this Species: Have seen this species in Texas about 6 or 7 times.Others who observed this species: John Stump, Alamosa, ColoradoSignificance (How rare is this for the area, optional): This is likely the 3rd record for the San Luis ValleyWas the bird Photographed? No Report was made 2 days laterObserver and Signature: John Rawnski Date: May 15, 2001

2002/01

Send to: Tony Leukering, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, 13401 Picadilly Road, Brighton, CO 80601