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CFO-RC FILE #: 2003-44  
RESULTS:

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS SIGHT RECORD FORM

(Please print or type. Attach photographs, drawings, and additional pages if necessary.)

rec'd 9/14/03

Species: LEAST BITTERN Ixobrychus exilis  
(Common Name) (Scientific Name)

Date(s) of observation: MAY 18, 2003 3 May 2003 (as per attached correspondence)

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: Male Plumage: Adult

Exact location: Ft. Lyons State Wildlife Area - in marshes to north of dike area (see A Birders Guide to Colorado p.56) about half way to end of dike

County: Kiowa Bent Nearest town: Fort Lyon Elevation: unknown

Length of observation: 30 sec. Times(s) of observation: 10:30 am

Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Peter Frechtel

Other observers who independently saw the bird(s):

Light conditions (quality; direction relative to bird's position): bright day, good light coming from front of bird

Optical equipment used: Pentax 8x43 DCF SP binoculars

Distance from bird(s) (estimated unless otherwise noted): 50 yards

Was bird photographed?: NO If so, have you submitted photographs?

Who took the photographs?

Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred: heavy marsh with little open water, Repeated "clunk", deep drum like calls heard from at least 3 different areas (Am. Bittern)

Describe the bird's behavior (flying; feeding; habits; behaviors used in identifying the species or in supporting the identification): flew from one section of reeds to another, stayed very low. Basically seen from above, bird or level to bird. ~~Cannnot hear~~ ~~the bright~~

Describe the bird(s) in detail. This is the most important part of this report. Include overall size and shape, and how you placed the bird(s) in the general group that you did. Give complete details of plumage, including head, throat, undersides, nape, back, wings, and tail. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird. Describe other details, such as color and shape of bill, legs, eye, (etc.) that were important in making the identification. (Fill out this portion even if photographs are submitted; you may attach additional sheets, drawings, field sketches, or copy of field notes):

bird was seen flying. It was very stocky, like a B.C. Night Heron but much smaller. Head was pushed back against body. Bill was thick and yellow-orange. The bright orange-yellow of the bird was very distinctive. A black back was seen. No white lines on back of bird were seen. No heavy stripes were seen in the front of the bird.  
Describe bird's call or song: un heard

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them: was much smaller than Am. Bittern or Black-crowned Night-Heron. Wing beats were quicker than Night Herons, the large orange-yellow wing patches contrasting with black back and top of head distinguish it from Rails and American Bittern.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? Have seen 3 American Bitterns and many Black-crowned Night Herons. 1st Least Bittern. Have seen Virginia Rail, Clapper Rail, Yellow Rail.

List books, guides, recordings, or other sources consulted and how these influenced your identification (during and after observation): Sibley Guide to Birds, National Geographic Birds of North America. Bird was I.D. el then checked in Sibley

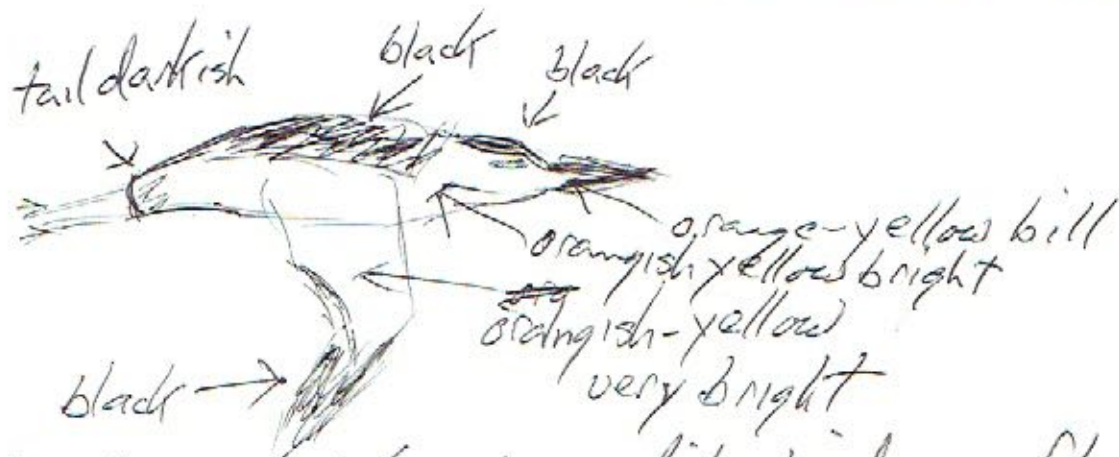
This report was made from notes made during \_\_\_\_\_ or after \_\_\_\_\_ observation, or later from memory X

Date of written report: 9/6/03  
Reporting observer: Charlie Lawrence Signature: Charlie Lawrence

Observer's address: 1181 E. Jamison, Centennial, CO 80122-3040

Send report to: Tony Leukering, P.O. Box 660, Brighton, CO. 80601





had only a quick view while bird was flying. Bird was not seen on ground.

Legs were hanging ~~between~~ behind body. Color was yellow or orangish.

Quick wing beats were noticed.

The crown of head was black.

~~The front of the bird~~

The upper breast of the bird seemed to be a lighter orangish-yellow but not white. No stripes were seen on breast but most of my view was from the side.

Under wings were not seen.

Large orange-yellow wing patches were seen on upper wing coverts.



2003-44

rec'd 9/14/03

# Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form

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

**Each table cell will automatically enlarge as you type!**

CBRC FILE #: 2002-44

## RESULTS:

Species: (Common Name) least bittern

(Scientific Name) ixobrychus exilis

Date(s) of occurrence: 5/3/2003

Number of birds seen: 1

Sex: ?

Plumage: nothing unusual

Exact location: Fort Lyon SWA, Bent County, over the marsh, close to the end of the 'low dike' described on p. 55 of Harry Holt's "Lane Guide"

County: Bent

Nearest town: Fort Lyon, Las Animas

Elevation: I don't know

Length of observation: 5 seconds, maybe

Time(s) of observation: mid-day, I don't remember exactly

Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Charlie Lawrence

Other observers who independently saw the bird(s): none that I know of

Light conditions (quality, direction relative to bird(s) and observers position: light was good, no problems, the bird was pretty much at eye level

Optical equipment used: Swift Audubon binoculars, 8.5 x 44

Distance to bird(s) (estimated, unless otherwise noted): 75 feet

Was (Were) bird(s) photographed? no

If so, are you submitting photos? n/a

Who took the photograph(s)? n/a

Describe the general and specific habitats in which the bird(s) occurred: freshwater marsh, high reeds

Describe the bird's (birds') behaviors, particularly behaviors that were used in supporting the identification, e.g., flying, feeding, habits: Flying maybe 5-10 feet over the marsh, not too quickly. It flew up out of the marsh, maybe flew 100 feet, then back down into the marsh.

**DESCRIPTION -- This is the most important part of this report.** Include in these details the overall size and shape of the bird and give as many plumage details as possible, even including those that you feel might not have relevance to the specific identification. Please fill out this portion even if photos are accompanying your report. Smallish, brownish bird, black back, two white stripes on the back nearly forming a V, rounded wings like a heron (not a shorebird). Much smaller than a night heron or American bittern, maybe the size of a mourning dove.

Describe the bird's (birds') call(s) and/or song(s), if noted: I never heard the bird.

**SIMILAR SPECIES -- This is another critical part of your report.** Please discuss how you eliminated similar species from consideration: Definitely a heron - flew like a heron, shaped like a heron. Definitely not a shorebird - too slow-flying, wings not pointed, wrong colors, too thickly built. Not a rail - wrong shape. Much too small for a night heron or American bittern. Wrong colors for a green heron. Obvious black back with two white lines in a V.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? I've seen maybe 10-15 least bitterns before, all on the east coast. I've seen 10-15 American bitterns, also maybe 10-15 rails, but I can only remember seeing a rail fly over the marsh like that once. I've seen many other herons in my 15 years of birding. Most of the least bitterns I've seen in my life I saw around Memorial Day 2001, on a trip to the marshes near Savannah, GA. I remember well what they looked like flying over a marsh - that was the way we saw most of them. I remember that black back with the white V, and the size and shape of the bird, and the way it flew. I knew what it was the second I saw it, and yelled to Charlie that it was a least bittern!

List books, guides, recordings, or other sources consulted and how these influenced your identification (during and after observation): I don't think I consulted a field guide for this bird, but I have a National Geographic field guide and Peterson's Guide to Western Birds.



This report was made from (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> notes made during observation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> notes made after observation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> later from memory.		
Date and time of written report: 9/11/2003, 5 PM		
Reporting observer: Peter Frechtel	Signature: <i>P. Frechtel</i>	
Reporting observer's address: 6790 E Cedar Ave #612		
City: Denver	State: CO	Zip: 80224
<p align="center"><b>Send report to:</b>  <b>Colorado Bird Records Committee</b>  <b>Tony Leukering</b>  <b>PO Box 660</b>  <b>Brighton, CO 80601</b></p>		

Length of observation: 1 hour

Other observers who saw the bird: Tony Leukering

Other observers who independently saw the bird: none that I know of

Light conditions (daylight, moonlight, etc.): daylight

Wind direction and speed: wind was gusty much as 15 mph

Optical equipment used: none

Distance to bird(s): estimated, under 1000 feet

Was the bird(s) photographed? no

Was the photograph(s) taken?

Describe the general and specific habitats in which the bird(s) occurred. Include the month, day, time, etc.

Describe the bird's (birds') behavior, particularly behaviors that were not in keeping with the normal behavior of the species. (e.g., feeding, feeding habits, flying, etc.)

DESCRIPTION - This is the most important part of the report. Include in this section the overall size and shape of the bird and any other plumage details, including those that are not mentioned in the key. Do not leave out the head, back, tail, and wing shape. If possible, include the head, back, tail, and wing shape. If possible, include the head, back, tail, and wing shape. If possible, include the head, back, tail, and wing shape.

Similar species from consideration. Include a brief description of the bird's (birds') appearance, including the head, back, tail, and wing shape. If possible, include the head, back, tail, and wing shape. If possible, include the head, back, tail, and wing shape.

Other notes: I saw a bird on the east coast of the United States. I saw a bird on the east coast of the United States. I saw a bird on the east coast of the United States.

2003-44

Least Bittern

From: Ric Olson [drdo@worldnet.att.net]  
Sent: Wednesday, June 04, 2003 7:41 AM  
To: Tony Luekering  
Subject: Least Bittern

Tony

Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form (Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.) Each table cell will automatically enlarge as you type!

CBRC FILE #:

RESULTS:

Species: Least Bittern (Common Name) *Ixobrychus exilis* (Scientific Name)

Date(s) of occurrence: May 25, 2003

Number of birds seen: one Sex: Plumage:

Exact location: Ft Lyons wildlife easement.

County: Bent Nearest town: Ft. Lyons Elevation: 5500

Length of observation: ten minutes Time(s) of observation: 18:10

Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Brandon Percival, Duane Nelson

Other observers who independently saw the bird(s): ?

Light conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s) and observers position:

Optical equipment used: Heard only

Distance to bird(s) (estimated, unless otherwise noted): 50 feet

Was (were) bird(s) photographed? If so, are you submitting photos?

Who took the photograph(s)?

Describe the general and specific habitats in which the bird(s) occurred:

Ft. Lyons marsh, cattails

Describe the bird's (birds') behaviors, particularly behaviors that were used in supporting the identification, e.g., flying, feeding, habits: The birds song was heard multiple times.

DESCRIPTION -- This is the most important part of this report. Include in these details the overall size and shape of the bird, how you placed the bird in the general group that you did, and give as many plumage details as possible, even including those that you feel might not have relevance to the specific identification. Features to include are the color(s) and/or patterns of the head, eyes, bill, back, folded wings, open wings, tail, chin, throat, breast, sides, flanks, belly, vent, and legs. Also, please include, where possible, shape of the whole bird, of the wings - folded or open, of the bill, and of the tail. Please fill out this portion even if photos are accompanying your report. We welcome attachments of additional sheets of description, drawings, field sketches, or copies of field notes.

Not Seen

Describe the bird's (birds') call(s) and/or song(s), if noted: Soft , descending coo-coo-coo. Repeated every 10 -15 seconds

SIMILAR SPECIES - This is another critical part of your report. Please discuss how you eliminated similar species from consideration: Blk-billed Cuckoo - eliminated because song was not a Blk-billed Cuckoo and in the wrong habitat.

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

List books, guides, recordings, or other sources consulted and how this influenced your identification (during and after observation):

This report was made from (check one) \_\_\_ notes made during observation \_\_\_ notes made after observation \_x\_ later from memory.

Date and time of written report: June 3, 2003

Reporting observer: Ric Olson Signature:

Reporting observer's address: 9450 N. Heather Dr.

City: Castle Rock, Co. 80108 State: Zip:

Send report to: Colorado Bird Records Committee Tony Leukering PO Box 660 Brighton, CO 80601