

RARE SPECIES DOCUMENTATION

Records of Vermont Birds

The following form has been prepared to encourage full documentation, when requested, of rare or unseasonal birds in the state of Vermont. These reports are put into a permanent file and should be as detailed as possible. New reports are reviewed annually by the Vermont Bird Records Committee, which evaluates records for their acceptability to future researchers and for inclusion in the state bird list.

Please print or type

SPECIES: American Bittern

NUMBER OBSERVED: 1

OBSERVER MAKING REPORT: OTHER OBSERVERS (and addresses if available); Susan and Marvin Elliott, 62 Heather Ln, Rutland, VT 05701; ovenbird14@yahoo.com

LOCATION: (place, township, county) West Rutland Marsh, West Rutland, VT (at the southwest corner of the intersection of Marble and Water streets)

DATE: February 9, 2015

TIME AND LENGTH OF OBSERVATION: 10:20 a.m., about 20 minutes

DISTANCES FROM BIRD: Maximum: 25' Minimum: 25'

WEATHER:

wind direction: 0-5; wind speed: didn't notice

sky cover: overcast, light snow; light in relation to observer's position: overcast so bird was seen in even light; temperature: 20 degrees F

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT: (make, power, etc.) Vortex Viper 8x32; Eagle Ranger 8x32

OBSERVER'S PREVIOUS ACQUAINTANCE WITH THIS SPECIES OR SIMILAR FORMS: seen frequently and at this location during the normal season for it

OTHER DOCUMENTATION: Photo X Tape Recording Specimen

If yes to the above, where is this information deposited? attached

HABITAT: (be as detailed as possible, include associated bird species); cattails, mostly beaten down by the winter weather; small patch of open water; no other bird species present in the immediate area

BIRD'S BEHAVIOR: (feeding actions, manner of flight, displays or interactions, reaction to observer): bird was not observed feeding; maintained a crouched position, stretching its neck out horizontally on occasion; moved a couple feet, eventually disappearing into a 'tent' of downed cattails

VOCALIZATION: (song or calls): none

DESCRIPTION: (Describe what you actually saw during the observation. We hope that observers will take field notes during the observation and before consulting field guides, etc. Additional pages with sketches and copies of field notes are encouraged.)

Relative size and shape: long body in crouched position

Head (crown, cheeks, eye, throat, nape): crown brown; tan line through and over eye; golden eye; gold cheek; white at base of bill and top of throat

Feet and Bill (shape, color, length): bill long (longer than width of the head); feet not seen

Upper back: dark brown with some golden brown splotches

Lower back and rump: not seen

Wings (shape, length, markings): folded against body; not observed in flight; brown

Breast, belly, flanks, undertail coverts: thick brown and tan vertical stripes on breast as well as flanks

Tail (shape, length, markings): not seen

IMPORTANT: WHAT SIMILAR SPECIES WERE ELIMINATED WHEN MAKING THIS IDENTIFICATION AND HOW WAS THIS BIRD DIFFERENT? large bird but almost have the size of a Great Blue Heron; long thin bill, but not much else similar to a heron as far as color and pattern

COMMENTS: The American Bittern was originally seen by Brad Coolidge of West Rutland on February 7; both he and his wife Connie saw it again on February 8 at the same location (they also have photos); C. J. Frankiewicz of Clarendon also saw the bittern on February 9 at 11:50 a.m.

This report was written from notes taken during _____ immediately after the observation, or written from memory _____ (please attach copies of notes if available)

NAME: Susan & Marvin Elliott SIGNATURE (not req'd) _____

MAILING ADDRESS: 62 Heather Ln, Rutland, VT 05701

DATE: February 9, 2015

Return electronically (preferred) to: vbrc@vtecostudies.org or mail to: Vermont Bird Records Committee, Vermont Center for Ecostudies, PO Box 420, Norwich, VT 05055



Susan Elliott