

Plumage Notes on the Little Bittern

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Two species of the small bitterns *Ixobrychus* have been recorded from Australia, the Little Bittern *I. minutus* and the Yellow Bittern *I. sinensis*. Although considered by Condon (1975) to be rare in Australia, the Little Bittern is the species that can be expected to be encountered in most instances. The Yellow Bittern, found through India, China, and Southeast Asia, has only been recorded in Australia once, from Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, in 1968. It has, however, been recently reported from Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (Hansen, 1976). Problems occasionally arise in the identification of specimens of the small bitterns and, if based solely on plumage, misidentification, even of birds in the hand, can occur.