

American Bittern with young in Essex County: Late in the afternoon of 4 July 1993, while driving on Northwoods Club Road near its Route 28N end in the Town of Minerva, we noticed an adult American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*). It was located within 50 yards of the road in a grassy part of a large marsh. The marsh is large, but sprawling, so that much of it is close to the upland edge. Several occupied dwellings exist along the edges. There were grassy areas, open water, and thick cattails in the part of the marsh where the bitterns were observed. The grass was short enough that the bittern was quite visible, especially when it stretched out its neck. We then noticed 3 young bitterns in the grass at various distances from the adult. The young were the same size as the adult, but still had some down on their heads. Next we noticed that the adult was feeding one of the young. The feeding was accomplished by the adult inserting its bill into that of the young. No food had been visible in the bill of the adult prior to this feeding. After a few minutes the adult flew off. The young remained behind, periodically assuming the stretched-neck pose typically associated with bitterns. It didn't work well as camouflage, however, since they were not among reeds or cattails. We later noticed another adult about 30 yards from the young, hunting for food. Had the adult circled around and landed without our noticing or was this its mate?

Barbara Butler, RD2 Box 161, Verbank, New York 12585, and **Helen Manson**, 2317 Route 82, Pleasant Valley, New York 12569