

LETTER — POSSIBLE DISTURBANCE OF NESTING BIRDS

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I found the report, "Nesting Least Bitterns at the Tonawanda/Iroquois/Oak Orchard Wetland Complex" (Seyler 1998) to be quite interesting. However, I was troubled by the author's techniques, which included walking right up to bittern nests, lifting the adult off the nest, and physically handling the nestlings. The author also advocates "foot searches through apparently suitable habitat on a weekly basis during the nesting period". These techniques are very invasive and the handling of nestlings is probably illegal without a permit. I would be surprised if such techniques do not reduce the rate of successful nesting of bitterns as well as degrade the nesting habitat.

LITERATURE CITED

Seyler DA. Nesting Least Bitterns at the Tonawanda/Iroquois/Oak Orchard wetland complex. *The Kingbird* 1998 Jun; 48(2): 108-115.