

 **Little Bittern**

 **Blongios nain**



*Ixobrychus minutus*

The Little Bittern is the smallest heron in Europe. The general colours of this Ardeid are beige, brown, reddish and blackish. The body is mostly light beige and the back is black. The wings are blackish with a light patch on the covers. The bill is brown/yellow. Legs are yellowish. The female is duller, darker and more contrasted. L. 33-38 cm ; E. 49-58 cm.

Breeding and non-breeding adult: the plumage is similar except that the bill turns red in the male on laying time.

Juveniles: at birth, the down is short, dense and darker ochre-yellow on top. Later they become similar to the female but with very broad brown stripes on the underparts.

Voice: The song "rou-rou-rou" is repeated, muffled and not very audible. Flight call "krékrékré" or "kuèr".

Eggs: white and dull. Usually 5 to 6 eggs are laid (4 to 10).

Nests: small, shallow platform. Built with the vegetation in which it is located (reeds in a reed bed, branches in a tamarisk).

Habitat: nests in reed beds, brambles or tamarisk groves .

Similar species: none. Nests mostly in isolation. More rarely in loose colonies

**Breeding adult**

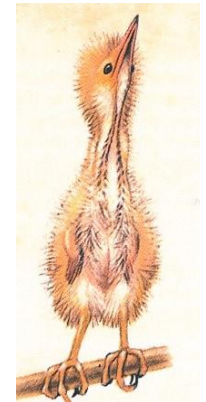


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**Egg**



**First week chick**



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