



**West African Ornithological Society
Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest
Africain**



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News and Letters

Request for information on Little Terns off West Africa

This note stems from discussions by the British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (BOURC) about a bird which was apparently a Least Tern *Sterna (albifrons) antillarum*, which was present at Rye Harbour, U.K., on and off through the summers of 1983-1992. BOURC is likely to accept this as a valid species, split from *S. albifrons*. However, there are problems over the status of the West African "*S. albifrons guineae*", which seems to be intermediate between the two species in plumage, but which is little known. In particular, there seem to be no recordings or other data relating to its vocalizations. Indeed, so little is known about it that it is even possible that it is actually a form of *S. antillarum*, rather than of *S. albifrons*. The plumage descriptions from Rye Harbour do not appear to exclude *guineae*, and this form may be as likely to turn up in Britain as N American *S. antillarum*.

The purpose of this note is to encourage any readers who might visit the range of *guineae* to pay particular attention to the bird and, if possible, to obtain recordings of its vocalizations. These would be of great value in allowing an assessment of the status of the subspecies and of the identity of the British records. Please send any information to:

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Yellow-billed Stork — *Tantale africain* — *Mycteria ibis*

Photo: Michael Gore