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02390 Red Kite *(Milvus milvus)*

Red Kite. Adult (30-XII).

RED KITE (*Milvus milvus*)

IDENTIFICATION

59-66 cm. Rufous neck and upperparts; reddish and streaked underparts; whitish and streaked head and nape; rufous wings with a large white patch underwing; forked and reddish tail; dark bill; yellow cere; pale yellowish iris.

Red Kite. Adult: pattern of head, breast and tail.

SIMILAR SPECIES

The only raptor with forked tail is **Black Kite**, with darker plumage and lacking reddish on tail.

Black Kite.

SEXING

Plumage of both sexes alike. **Males** usually smaller than **females**, but much overlap makes size an useless characteristic to sex individual specimens.

AGEING

3 age groups can be recognized:
Juvenile with flight and tail feathers without moult limits; breast feathers mainly whitish with a narrow dark shaft streak; greater and primary coverts tipped pale forming a thin pale line; brownish tail feathers with a slight subterminal bar; bill with dark base; brown or brownish-grey iris. **CAUTION:** in early **autumn** some specimens have **adult** body feathers.
2nd year autumn/3rd year spring only in specimens with retained **juvenile** flight feathers (mainly secondaries) bleached brown and more pointed; sometimes may be retained some **juvenile** body feathers.
Adult with breast feathers intense rufous with a broad dark shaft streak; primary coverts lacking pale tips; reddish tail, usually unbarred; bill with yellowish base; pale yellow iris.

Red Kite. Ageing. Pattern of head and iris colour: left adult; right juvenile.

Red Kite. Ageing. Pattern of breast: left adult; right juvenile.

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Red Kite. Ageing. Pattern of tail: left adult; right juvenile.

Red Kite. Ageing. Pattern of primary coverts: top adult; bottom juvenile.

MOULT

Complete **postbreeding** moult, starting in April and usually finished in Otober; during **postbreeding** migration some outer primaries and median secondaries retained to be moulted in wintering sites; occasionally with some unmoulted secondaries. Partial **postjuvenile** moult starting in some birds with body feathers in October (others don't moult anything); flight and tail feathers start their moult in March-April of **2nd year**, being usually a complete moult in most birds; some specimens may retain **juvenile** flight feathers.

PHENOLOGY

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII

Summer visitor
Resident
Wintering
On passage

Red Kite. 2nd year autumn (7-XII).

Red Kite. 2nd year spring (05-I).

Red Kite. 1st year (30-XII).

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Red Kite. Pattern of head and iris colour. From top to bottom: adult (30-XII); 2nd year autumn (07-XII); 2nd year spring (05-I); 1st year (30-XII).

Red Kite. Breast pattern: top left adult (30-XII); top right 2nd year autumn (07-XII); left 2nd year spring (05-I); botton 1st year (30-XII).

Red Kite. Pattern of under-tail coverts: top adult (30-XII); botton 1st year (30-XII).

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Red Kite. Upperpart pattern: left adult (30-XII); right 2nd year autumn (07-XII).


Red Kite. Upperpart pattern: left 2nd year spring (05-I); right 1st year (30-XII).


Red Kite. Tail pattern: left adult (30-XII); right 2nd year autumn (07-XII).


Red Kite. Tail pattern: left 2nd year spring (05-I); right 1st year (30-XII).

Red Kite. Adult: pattern of primary coverts (30-XII).

Red Kite. 2nd year autumn: pattern of primary coverts (07-XII).

02390 Red Kite *(Milvus milvus)*

Red Kite. 2nd year spring: pattern of primary coverts (05-I).

Red Kite. 1st year: pattern of primary coverts (20-XII).

Red Kite. Adult: pattern of primaries (30-XII).

Red Kite. 2nd year autumn: pattern of primaries (07-XII).

Red Kite. 2nd year spring: pattern of primaries (05-I).

02390 Red Kite *(Milvus milvus)*

Red Kite. 1st year: pattern of primaries (20-XII).

Red Kite. Adult: pattern of secondaries (30-XII).

Red Kite. 2nd year autumn: pattern of secondaries (1 juvenile feathers) (07-XII).

Red Kite. 2nd year spring: pattern of secondaries (05 -I).

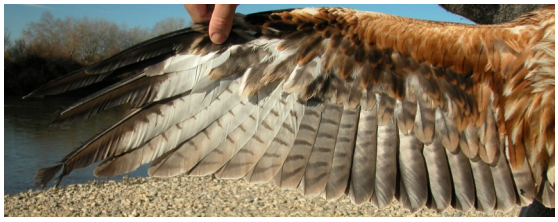
02390 Red Kite *(Milvus milvus)*

Red Kite. 1st year: pattern of secondaries (20-XII).

Red Kite. Adult: pattern of wing (30-XII).

Red Kite. 2nd year autumn: pattern of wing (1 juvenile feather) (07-XII).

Red Kite. 2nd year spring: pattern of wing (05-I).



Red Kite. 1st year: pattern of wing (30-XII).