

# 03040 Common Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*)

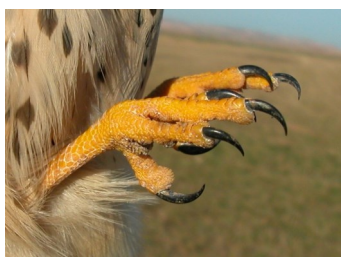
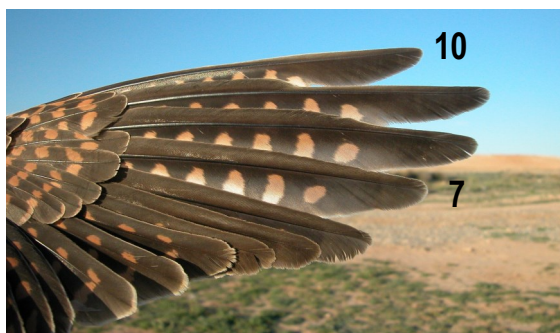


Kestrel. Adult. Male (24-XI).

## COMMON KESTREL (*Falco tinnunculus*)

### IDENTIFICATION

31-38 cm. Pointed wings and long tail, with black terminal band; dark claws; brown upperparts, mottled in both sexes; pale buff underparts; grey head and tail in **male**, buff and streaked in **female** and **juvenile**; the outermost primary with the same length than 7th.



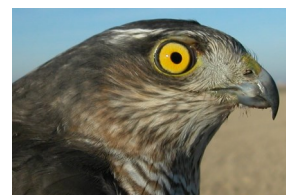
Kestrel. Female: wing formula and colour of claws.



Kestrel. Male: pattern of wing, head and upperparts.

### SIMILAR SPECIES

Recalls a **Sparrowhawk**, with grey upperparts and yellow or orange iris. The only small raptor with brown upperparts is **Lesser Kestrel**, with pale claws and the outermost primary longer than 7th; **male Lesser Kestrel** has unspotted upperparts and a blue band on wings.



Sparrowhawk.

# 03040 Common Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*)



Lesser Kestrel. Male: pattern of wing, head and upperparts.



Lesser Kestrel. Female: wing formula and colour of claws.

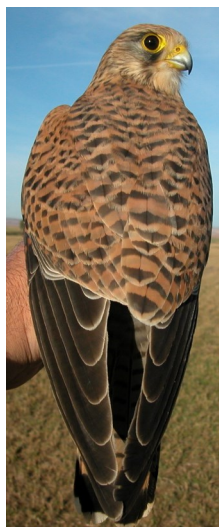
## SEXING

**Adult male** with grey head, slightly streaked dark; upperparts feathers with a dark subterminal mark; tail feathers grey, usually unbarred; uppertail coverts and rump uniform grey, without barred; upperwing coverts with sparse black mottled. **Adult female** with brown head, streaked black; tail, uppertail coverts and rump barred and usually, but not always, with greyish tinge; upperparts and upperwing coverts with dense dark brown mottled with triangular shape. **CAUTION:** plumage in **adult females** is very variable and can be similar from a **juvenile** to that of a **male** with grey rump, tail and head. **Juveniles** can be sexed only in extreme birds: **male** with uppertail coverts with grey tinge; **female** with uppertail coverts without grey tinge (**CAUTION:** there is much variability between different families being able to find **males** without grey and **females** with grey; sexing is recommended only if it can be compared within siblings). After their **postjuvenile** moult both sexes can be recognized by pattern of the upperparts and rump.



Kestrel. Sexing. Adult. Pattern of head: top male; bottom female.



**03040 Common Kestrel** (*Falco tinnunculus*)

Kestrel. Sexing. Adult. Pattern of upperparts: left male; right female.



Kestrel. Sexing. Adult. Pattern of lesser coverts: top male; bottom female.



Kestrel. Sexing. Adult. Pattern of rump and tail: left male; right female.



Kestrel. Sexing. Juvenile. Pattern of tail and uppertail coverts: left male; right female.

**AGEING**

3 age groups can be recognized:

**Juvenile** resembles a **female** but with very fresh plumage and without moult limits on tail and flight feathers; primary coverts with pale tips forming a line; secondaries with broad pale tips; black subterminal band on the outer tail feathers with crescent-shaped.

**1st year winter/2nd year spring** with contrast between fresh **adult** and worn **juvenile** feathers on mantle and wing coverts; **juvenile** primary coverts and secondaries with broad pale tips; **juvenile** outer tail feathers with crescent-shaped black subterminal band; in **males**, rump with strong contrast within moulted **adult** blue feathers and rufous **juvenile** unmoulted.

**Adult** without **juvenile** feathers on body and wings; primary coverts without pale tip; secondaries with narrow pale tip; grey tail feathers without barred in **male** and rufous colour, with more or less grey tinge, in **female**; in **females** outer tail feathers with squared black subterminal band.

**MOULT**

Complete **postbreeding** moult, usually finished in October. Partial **postjuvenile** moult confined to body feathers, scapulars and, sometimes, lesser and median wing coverts; normally finished in November.

**PHENOLOGY**

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

■ Summer visitor

■ Wintering

■ Resident

■ On passage





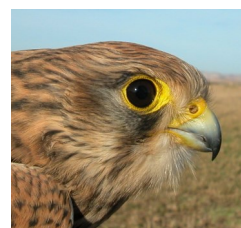
Kestrel. Adult. Female (13-I).



Kestrel. Juvenile. Female (07-VII).



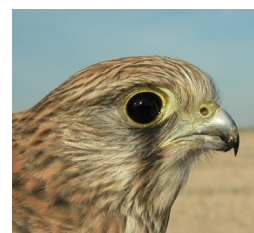
Kestrel. 1st year. Male (29-XII).



Kestrel. Adult. Head pattern: left male (24-XI); right female (13-I).



Kestrel. 1st year. Female (27-IX).



Kestrel. 1st year. Head pattern: left male (29-XII); right female (27-IX).



Kestrel. Juvenile. Male (07-VII).



Kestrel. Juvenile. Head pattern: left male (07-VII); right female (07-VII).



**03040 Common Kestrel** (*Falco tinnunculus*)



Kestrel. Adult. Breast pattern: left male (24-XI); right female (13-I).



Kestrel. 1st year. Breast pattern: left male (29-XII); right female (27-IX).



Kestrel. Juvenile. Breast pattern: left male (07-VII); right female (07-VII).



Kestrel. Adult. Upperparts pattern: left male (24-XI); right female (13-I).



Kestrel. 1st year. Upperparts pattern: left male (29-XII); right female (27-IX).



Kestrel. Juvenile. Upperparts pattern: left male (07-VII); right female (07-VII).



Kestrel. Adult. Flank pattern: top male (24-XI); bottom female (13-I).



**03040 Common Kestrel** (*Falco tinnunculus*)



Kestrel.  
1st year.  
F l a n k  
pattern:  
top male  
(29-XII);  
bottom  
female  
(27-IX).



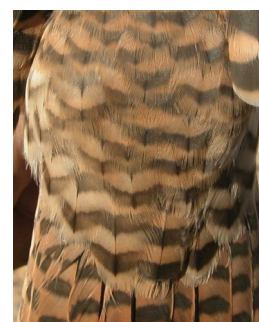
Kestrel.  
Juvenile.  
F l a n k  
pattern:  
top male  
(07-VII);  
bottom  
female  
(07-VII).



Kestrel. Adult. Pat-  
tern of rump and  
uppertail coverts: left  
male (24-XI); top  
right (13-I) and left  
female (27-IX).



Kestrel. 1st year. Pattern of rump and uppertail coverts: left male (29-XII); right female (27-IX).



Kestrel. Juvenile. Pattern of rump and uppertail coverts: left male (07-VII); right female (07-VII).



Kestrel. Adult. Tail  
pattern: left male (24-  
XI); top right (13-I)  
and left female (27-  
IX).



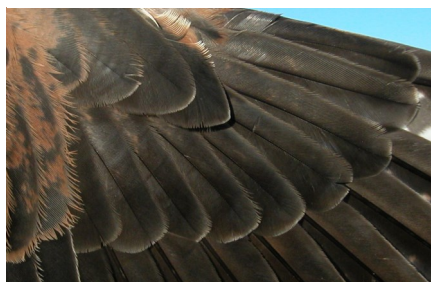
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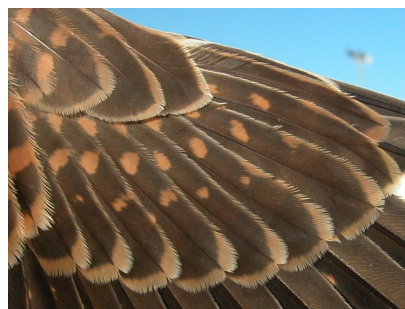
Kestrel. 1st year. Tail pattern: left male (29-XII); right female (27-IX).



Kestrel. Juvenile. Tail pattern: left male (07-VII); right female (07-VII).



Kestrel. Adult. Pattern of primary coverts: top male (24-XI); bottom female (13-I).



Kestrel. 1st year. Pattern of primary coverts: top male (29-XII); bottom female (27-IX).



Kestrel. Juvenile. Pattern of primary coverts: top male (07-VII); bottom female (07-VII).



Kestrel. Adult. Male: pattern of primaries (24-XI).





Kestrel. Adult. Female: pattern of primaries (13-I).



Kestrel. 1st year. Male: pattern of primaries (29-XII).



Kestrel. 1st year. Female: pattern of primaries (27-IX).



Kestrel. Juvenile. Male: pattern of primaries (07-VII).



Kestrel. Juvenile. Female: pattern of primaries (07-VII).



Kestrel. Adult. Male: pattern of wing coverts and secondaries (24-XI).



Kestrel. Adult. Female: pattern of wing coverts and secondaries (13-I).





Kestrel. 1st year. Male: pattern of wing coverts and secondaries (29-XII).



Kestrel. 1st year. Female: pattern of wing coverts and secondaries (27-IX).



Kestrel. Juvenile. Male: pattern of wing coverts and secondaries (07-VII).



Kestrel. Juvenile. Female: pattern of wing coverts and secondaries (07-VII).



Kestrel. Adult. Male: pattern of wing (26-III).



Kestrel. Adult. Female: pattern of wing (12-VI).





Kestrel. 1st year. Male: pattern of wing (29-XII).



Kestrel. 1st year. Female: pattern of wing (27-IX).



Kestrel. Juvenile. Male: pattern of wing (07-VII).



Kestrel. Juvenile. Female: pattern of wing (07-VII).