03350 Western Capercaillie (Tetrao urogallus)



WESTERN CAPERCAILLIE (Tetrao urogallus)

IDENTIFICATION

Male 86-110 cm.; female 60-75 cm. Male with dark grey head and neck; black upperparts, with grey tinge; black breast; brown wing coverts; black tail with pale tinge; white bill. Female with brown plumage, white spotted on head, neck and rump; brown wings; reddish brown tail with black barred; grey bill.

SIMILAR SPECIES

This species is unmistakable

AGEING

3 types of age can be recognized:

Juvenile birds, only during a short intermediate stage, with plumage described in **SEXING**.

1st year autumn/2nd year spring like adults but male with short and narrow tail feathers, poorly mottled white; crown, hindneck and sides of head grey and poorly glossy; upper tail coverts strongly vermiculated grey; with moult limit between the retained two outermost juvenile primaries and the other ones; upperwing coverts very brown. Female similar to adult female, bur with pale brown and narrow tail feathers; with moult limit between the retained two outermost juvenile primaries and the other ones.

Adults with body feathers as described in **SE-XING**; primaries without moult limit; tail feathers broad, strongly mottled white in **male** and dark brown in **female**.

SEXING

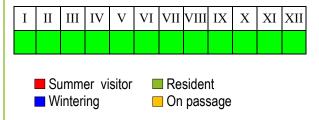
Male unmistakable with dark grey plumage; metallic blue-green breast; lower flanks and belly mottled white; black tail; flight feathers and wing coverts brown; with a small white patch on marginal coverts at leading edge of wing; bare skin over the eye bright red; pale yellow bill: wing longer than 350 mm. Female with dark brown plumage, densely barred pale buff; cinnamon breast with some brown spots and white fringes, which are wider on lower flanks and belly; tail densely barred dark brown with pale tips; pale brown flight feathers; pale brown wing coverts mottled and tipped buff; bare skin over the eye pale red; grey brown bill: wing shorter than 284 mm.

Juveniles can be sexed using plumage characters: male with buff-grey crown and neck; upperparts pale brown, barred and vermiculated dark brown; pale grey throat, barred black; wing coverts mottled rufous brown with pale buff triangles at tips. Female with buff-brown crown and neck; upperparts similar to male but boldly patterned; pale buff throat, finely spotted black; wing coverts similar to male but boldly patterned.

MOULT

Complete **postbreeding** moult; usually finished by October. Partial **postjuvenile** moult remaining unmoulted the two outermost primaries; usually finished in September.

PHENOLOGY



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http://blascozumeta.com http://www.aranzadi.eus