

37 Black-crowned Night Heron

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Night Heron. Adult (02-VII)



Night Heron. Ageing. Pattern of head and iris colour: top adult; middle 2nd year (Photo: Alex Fono-llosa); bottom juvenile

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

IDENTIFICATION

58-65 cm. **Adult** with black upperparts, crown and nape; bluish wings, tail and rump; whitish underparts. **Juveniles** are brown with white spotting on upperparts and dark spots on underparts.

SIMILAR SPECIES

This species is unmistakable

SEXING

Plumage of both sexes alike. Usually with ornamental feathers longer and more numerous in **male** than in **female**.

AGEING

4 types of age can be recognized:

Juvenile with upperparts dark-brown spotted buff-white; secondaries and inner primaries with white-buff tips; underparts striped dark-brown; wing coverts with broad buff tips; without long white feathers on the nape; yellowish bill; yellow iris.

2nd year with mixed **juvenile** and **adult** plumage; with brown streaks on both sides of neck; wing coverts and flight feathers with a mix of **juvenile** and **adult** feathers; with short white feathers on the nape; bill with yellowish tinge; brown-reddish iris.

3rd year similar to **adult** but occasionally some birds may retain **juvenile** outer primaries and/or median secondaries.

Adult with crown, mantle and scapulars deep black; neck without streaks; wing coverts and flight feathers uniformly grey; usually with several generations of flight feathers; with long white feathers on the nape; black bill; reddish iris.

MOULT

Complete **postbreeding** moult; usually finished in November. (**CAUTION**: moult usually arrested and some outer primaries may be retained). Partial **postjuvenile** moult confined to body feathers in wintering quarters. Apparently no partial **prebreeding** moult.

PHENOLOGY

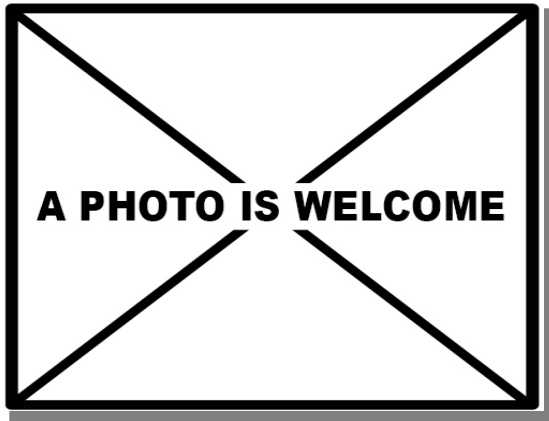
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII

STATUS IN ARAGON

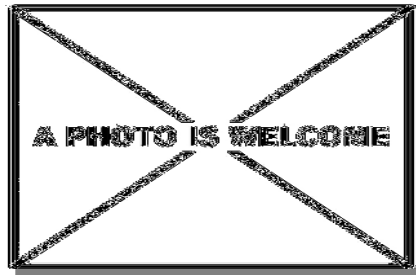
Summer visitor, with scarce breeding colonies in the Ebro river and tributaries.

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Night Heron. Head pattern: top adult (02-VII); bottom 3rd year ()



Night Heron. 3rd year ()



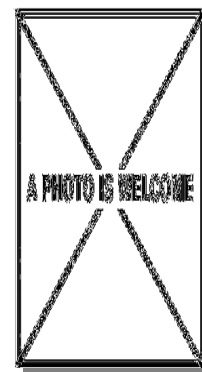
Night Heron. 2nd year (27-V) (Photo: Àlex Fonollosa)



Night Heron. Head pattern: top 2nd year (27-V) (Photo: Àlex Fonollosa); bottom juvenile (24-VII)



Night Heron. Juvenile (24-VII)



Night Heron. Crown pattern: left adult (02-VII); right 3rd year ()

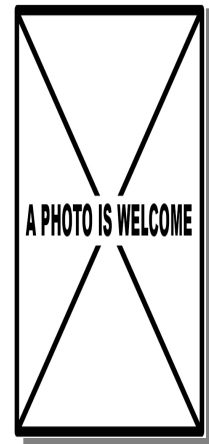
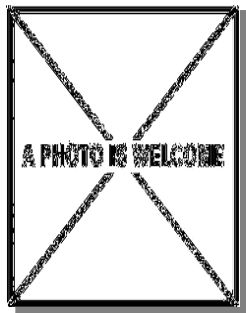
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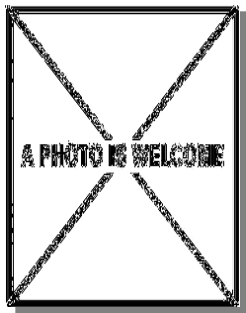


Night Heron. Breast pattern: left 2nd year (); right juvenile (24-VII).

Night Heron. Crown pattern: left 2nd year (); right juvenile (24-VII).

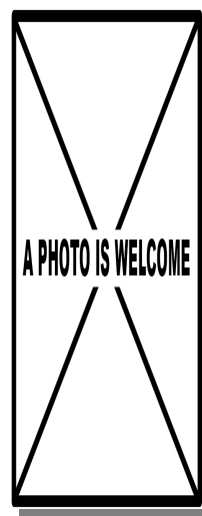


Night Heron. Nape pattern: left adult (); right 3rd year (02-VII).



Night Heron. Upperparts pattern: left adult (); right 3rd year (02-VII).

Night Heron. Nape pattern: left 2nd year (); right juvenile (24-VII).



Night Heron. Breast pattern: left adult (); right 3rd year (02-VII).

Night Heron. Upperparts pattern: left 2nd year (); right juvenile (24-VII).

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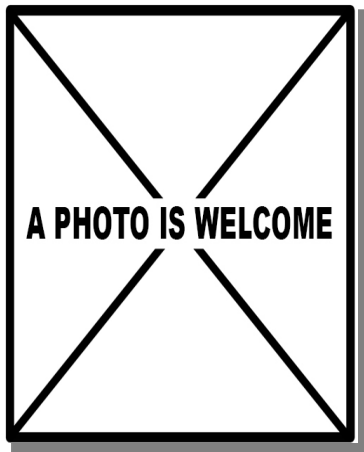
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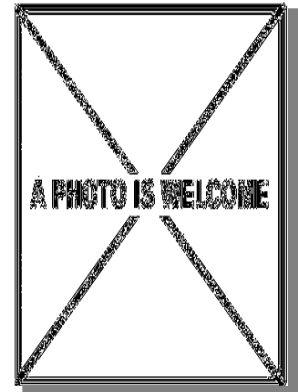
Night Heron. Adult: pattern of legs (02-VII).



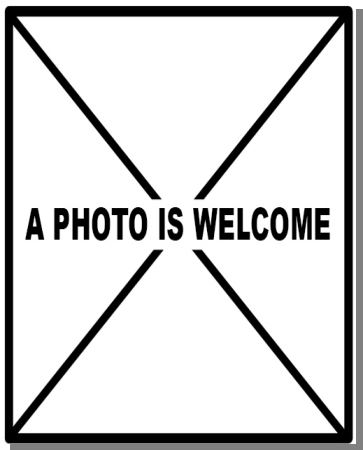
Night Heron. Juvenile: pattern of legs (24-VII).



Night Heron. 2nd year: pattern of legs ().



Night Heron. Tail pattern: left adult (); right 3rd year (02-VII).



Night Heron. 3rd year: pattern of legs ().



Night Heron. Tail pattern: left 2nd year (27-V) (Photo: Àlex Fonollosa); right juvenile (24-VII).

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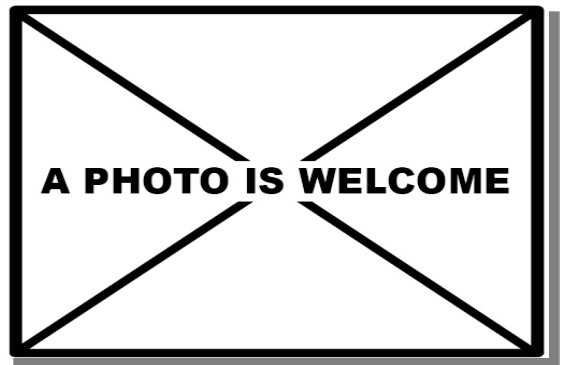
Night Heron. Adult: pattern of wing covers (02-VII).



Night Heron. Adult: pattern of primary covers (02-VII).



Night Heron. 3rd year: pattern of wing covers ().



Night Heron. 2nd year: pattern of wing covers (27-V) (Photo: Alex Fonollosa).

Night Heron. 3rd year: pattern of primary covers ().



Night Heron. Juvenile: pattern of wing covers (24-VII).



Night Heron. 2nd year: pattern of primary covers (27-V) (Photo: Alex Fonollosa).

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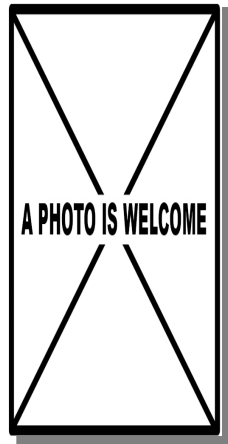
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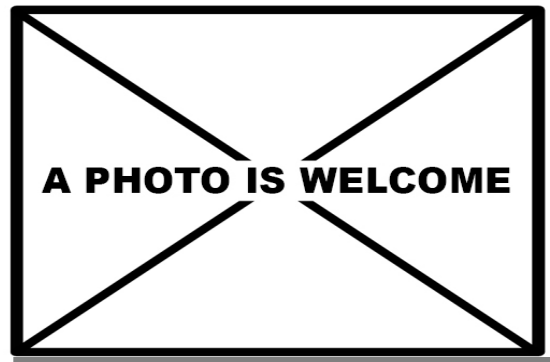
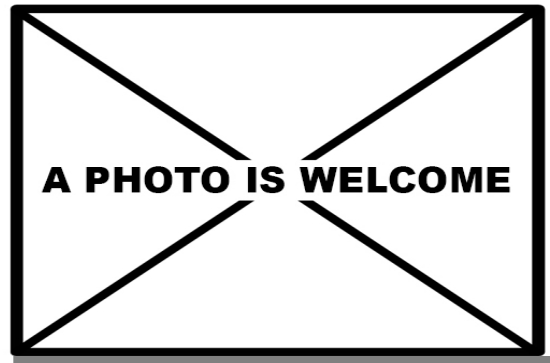
Night Heron. Juvenile: pattern of primary coverts (24-VII).



Night Heron. Adult: pattern of primaries (02-VII).



Night Heron. Pattern of tertials: left adult (02-VII); right 3rd year ().



Night Heron. Pattern of tertials: left 2nd year (27-V) (Photo: Àlex Fonollosa); right juvenile (24-VII).

Night Heron. 3rd year: pattern of primaries ().

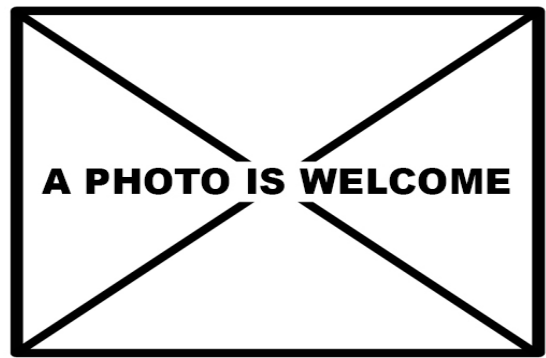
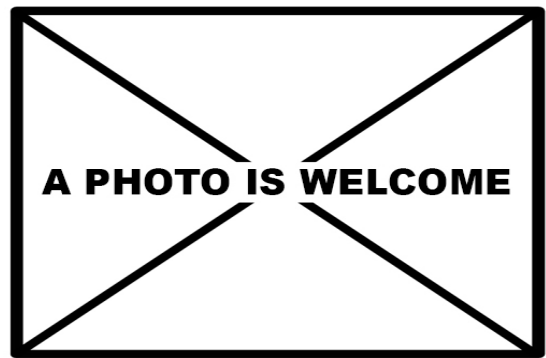
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Night Heron. 2nd year: pattern of primaries (27-V)
(Photo: Àlex Fonollosa).

Night Heron. Adult: pattern of secondaries (02-VII).



Night Heron. Juvenile: pattern of primaries (24-VII).

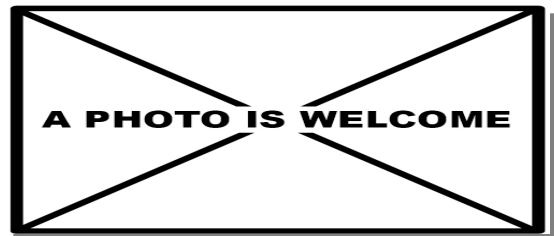
Night Heron. 3rd year: pattern of secondaries ().

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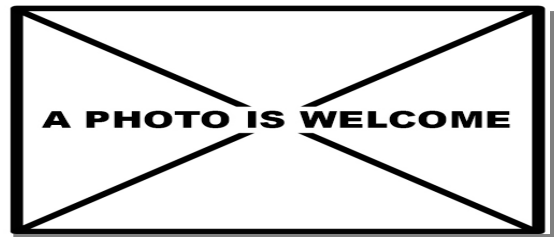
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Night Heron. Adult: pattern of wing (02-VII).



Night Heron. 2nd year: pattern of secondaries (27-V)
(Photo: Àlex Fonollosa).



Night Heron. 3rd year: pattern of wing ().



Night Heron. Juvenile: pattern of secondaries (24-VII).



Night Heron. 2nd year: pattern of wing (27-V)
(Photo: Àlex Fonollosa).

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Night Heron. Juvenile: pattern of wing (24-VII).