

**PURPLE SWAMPHEN** (*Porphyrio porphyrio*)

**IDENTIFICATION**

40-48 cm. **Adult** with purple blue plumage; white undertail coverts; frontal shield, bill and legs red. **Juvenile** with slate grey plumage with paler underparts; grey bluish bill; red legs.

**SIMILAR SPECIES**

Size and bluish plumage make this species unmistakable.

**SEXING**

Both sexes with similar plumage. Size can be an useful character with most of the specimens: **male** with wing longer than 265 mm; **female** with wing shorter than 250 mm (**CAUTION:** size of **juvenile** generally like **adult** but wing slightly shorter in some birds).

**MOULT**

Complete **postbreeding** moult, usually finished by September. Partial **postjuvenile** moult involving body feathers; usually finished by October. Both types of age have a **prebreeding** moult changing body feathers.

**AGEING**

3 types of age can be recognized:

**Juvenile** with dark grey mantle; lower upperparts and wing coverts dull violet blue; off-white chin; grey flanks; in early stages dull red bill, later bright red but dusky at sides; iris red brown; tarsus and toes dull ochre red.

**1st year autumn/2nd year spring** similar to **adults**, but head and upperparts slightly duller violet blue; centre of breast and underparts mixed dark grey and white; **juvenile** retained flight feathers will be more eroded than in **adults**.

**Adult** with violet blue mantle; lower upperparts and wing coverts pure violet blue; cobalt chin; deep red bill; iris red; tarsus and toes coral red.

**PHENOLOGY**

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

- Summer visitor
- Resident
- Wintering
- On passage