

269 Little Owl

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Little Owl. Spring. Adult (04-IV).

LITTLE OWL (*Athene noctua*)**IDENTIFICATION**

21-27 cm. Brownish upperparts, with white spots; breast white and brown streaked; brown flight feathers tinged white and buff; tail barred pale buff; head lacking tufts; green yellowish bill; yellow eyes.



Little Owl. Pattern of head, bill and wing.

**SIMILAR SPECIES**

Scops Owl has similar size (a bit smaller) and yellow eyes, but has tufts on head and breast and underparts are streaked



Scops Owl

SEXING

Both sexes alike in plumage. Usually, **male** smaller than **female** but size is not useful for sexing due to overlap.

AGEING

4 age groups can be recognized:

Juvenile with brown crown without pale marks; upperparts with abundant pale marks; body feathers loose and downy; flight and tail feathers very fresh; tip of 10th primary pointed; secondaries with pointed tips.

1st year autumn/2nd year spring similar to **adult** but with all flight and tail feathers **juvenile**; crown feathers with thin brown edge and broad white centre; with moult limit between moulted outermost greater coverts (dark grey and with large white patch) and **juvenile** inner unmoulted (brown and with a small buff patch); flight and tail feathers worn; secondaries with pointed tip; 10th primary with pointed tip.

2nd year autumn/3rd year spring only in a little number of birds with some retained **juvenile** secondary.

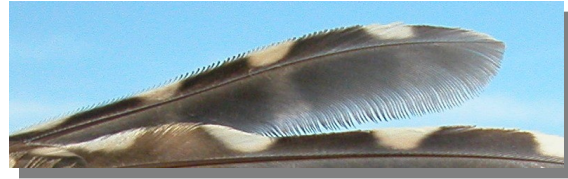
Adult with crown feathers with broad brown edge and thin white centre; upperparts with scarce pale marks; flight and tail feathers fresh; 10th primary with rounded tip; secondaries with rounded tips; if there are two ages of secondaries, both are with **adult** pattern.

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Little Owl. Adult. Ageing. Head pattern: top adult; bottom juvenile.



Little Owl. Ageing. Pattern of tip of 10th primary: top adult; bottom juvenile.



Little Owl. Adult. Ageing. Crown pattern: left adult; right juvenile.



Little Owl. Adult. Ageing. Pattern of tips of secondaries: left adult; right juvenile.

MOULT

Complete **postbreeding** moult, but sometimes some secondary is retained; usually finished in November. Partial **postjuvenile** moult involving body feathers, lesser and median coverts and some outermost greater coverts; generally finished in October. In **2nd year** have a complete **postbreeding** moult, but sometimes some **juvenile** secondary still retained for another year.

PHENOLOGY

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

STATUS IN ARAGON

Resident, widely distributed throughout the Region, absent only from Northern areas.



Little Owl. Spring. 2nd year (10-IV).

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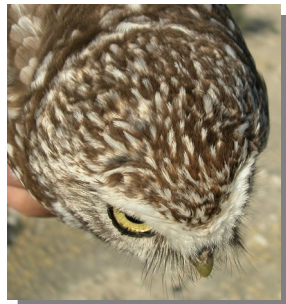
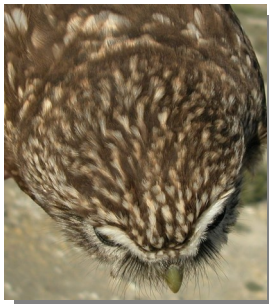
Little Owl. Spring. Juvenile (02-VII).



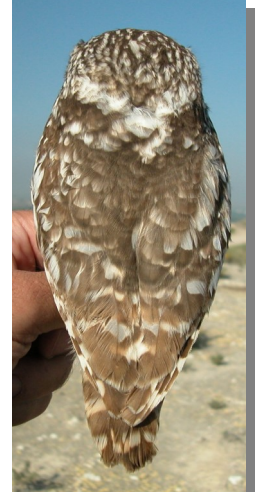
Little Owl. Spring. Breast pattern: top left adult (04-IV); top right 2nd year (10-IV); left juvenile (02-VII).



Little Owl. Spring. Head pattern: top left adult (04-IV); top right 2nd year (10-IV); left juvenile (02-VII).



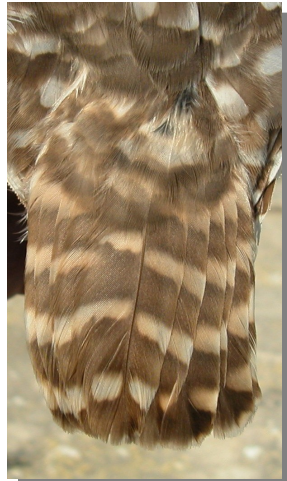
Little Owl. Spring. Crown pattern: top left adult (04-IV); top right 2nd year (10-IV); left juvenile (02-VII).



Little Owl. Spring. Upperparts pattern: top left adult (04-IV); top right 2nd year (10-IV); left juvenile (02-VII).

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Little Owl. Spring. 2nd year: pattern of primary coverts (10-IV).



Little Owl. Spring. Tail pattern: top left adult (04-IV); top right 2nd year (10-IV); left juvenile (02-VII).



Little Owl. Spring. Juvenile: pattern of primary coverts (02-VII).



Little Owl. Spring. Adult: pattern of primary coverts (04-IV).

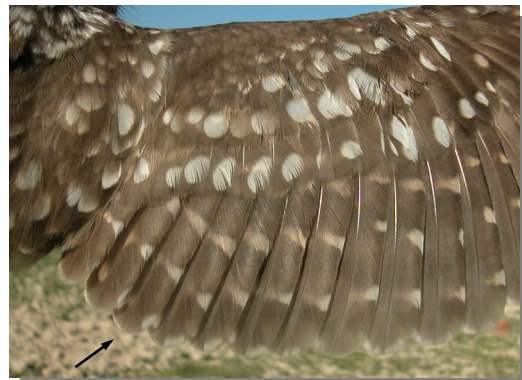
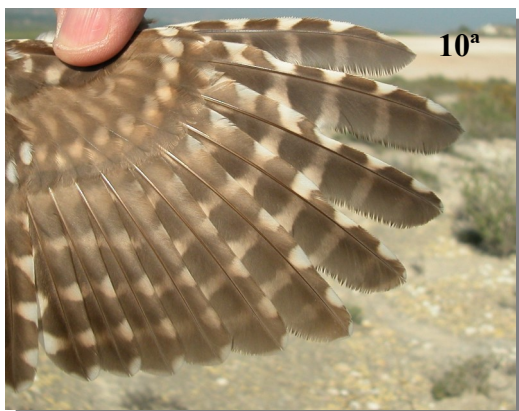
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Little Owl. Spring. Adult: pattern of primaries (04-IV).

Little Owl. Spring. Juvenile: pattern of primaries (02-VII).



Little Owl. Spring. 2nd year: pattern of primaries (10-IV).

Little Owl. Spring. Adult: pattern of secondaries (04-IV).

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Little Owl. Spring. Adult: pattern of wing (04-IV).



Little Owl. Spring. 2nd year: pattern of secondaries (10-IV).



Little Owl. Spring. 2nd year: pattern of wing (10-IV).



Little Owl. Spring. Juvenile: pattern of secondaries (02-VII).



Little Owl. Spring. Juvenile: pattern of wing (02-VII).

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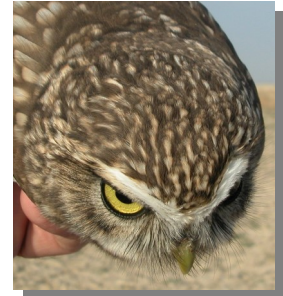
Little Owl. Autumn. Adult. (05-XI).



Little Owl. Autumn. 1st year (05-XI).



Little Owl.
Autumn.
Head pat-
tern: top
adult (05-
XI); bottom
1st year (05-
XI).



Little Owl. Autumn. Head pattern: left adult (05-XI); right 1st year (05-XI).



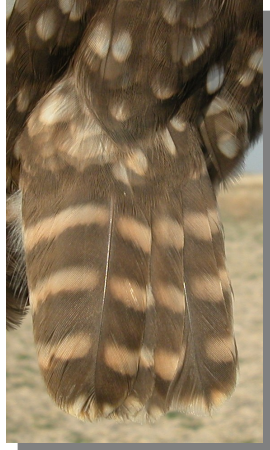
Little Owl. Autumn. Breast pattern: left adult (05-XI); right 1st year (05-XI).



Little Owl. Autumn. Upperparts pattern: left adult (05-XI); right 1st year (05-XI).

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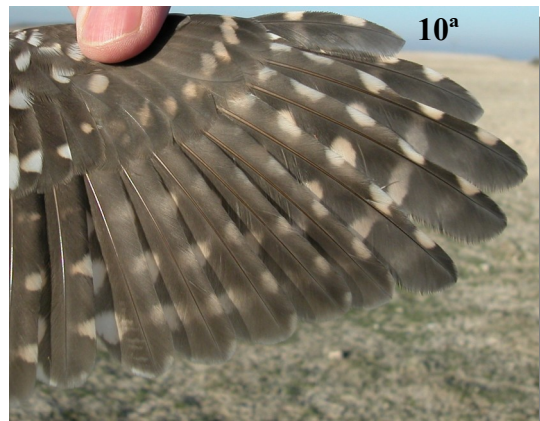
Little Owl. Autumn. Tail pattern: left adult (05-XI); right 1st year (05-XI).



Little Owl. Autumn. Pattern of tips on secondaries: left adult (05-XI); right 1st year (05-XI).



Little Owl. Autumn. Adult: pattern of primary coverts (05-XI).



Little Owl. Autumn. 1st year: pattern of primary coverts (05-XI).



Little Owl. Autumn. Adult: pattern of primaries (05-XI).

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Little Owl. Autumn. 2nd year: pattern of primaries (02-X).

Little Owl. Autumn. Adult with completed moult: pattern of secondaries (05-XI).



Little Owl. Autumn. 1st year: pattern of primaries (05-XI).

Little Owl. Autumn. Adult with arrested moult: pattern of secondaries (07-XI).

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Little Owl. Autumn. 2nd year: pattern of secondaries (02-X).



Little Owl. Autumn. 1st year: pattern of secondaries (05-XI).



Little Owl. Autumn. Adult with completed moult: pattern of wing (05-XI).



Little Owl. Autumn. Adult with arrested moult: pattern of wing (07-XI).



Little Owl. Autumn. 2nd year: pattern of wing (02-X).

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Little Owl. Autumn. 1st year: pattern of wing (05-XI).