

# 272 Short-eared Owl

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Short-eared Owl. Adult. Male (22-I).

## SHORT-EARED OWL (*Asio flammeus*)

### IDENTIFICATION

34-42 cm. Brown upperparts with dark streaks; buff underparts, streaked brown; brown-reddish flight feathers with dark wing tips; reddish tail with brownish barred; very short tufts; black bill; yellow eyes.

Short-eared Owl.  
Pattern of iris and wing

### SIMILAR SPECIES

**Long-eared Owl** has similar size and plumage pattern but with orange eyes and without black tips on wings.



Long-eared Owl

### SEXING

**Male** with lower part of abdomen very narrow streaking; outermost tail feather with 2-3 bars on inner shaft only; pale tips of secondaries rather broad; inner web of inner secondaries white, slightly barred; on underwing barring more conspicuous on primaries, fading towards secondaries, even disappearing. **Female** with lower part of abdomen broad streaking; the outermost tail feather with 3-5 bars on both webs; pale tips of secondaries rather narrow; inner web of inner secondaries whitish-buff, with well defined bars; on underwing barring clearly marked throughout all the wing. **Juveniles** can be sexed using pattern of the outermost tail feather and barring of underwing. **CAUTION:** difference based on streaking of lower part of abdomen is not always an useful characteristics due to overlap. Likewise, birds have been recorded that do not meet the criteria of barred of the outermost tail feather and underwing.



Short-eared Owl. Sexing. Pattern of streaked on underparts: left male; right female.

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Short-eared Owl. Sexing. Pattern of secondaries: left male; right female.



Short-eared Owl. Sexing. Pattern of the outermost tail feather: left male; right female.



Short-eared Owl. Sexing. Pattern of the underwing flight feathers: top male; bottom female.

## AGEING

It's difficult to find **breeders** in Aragon, so only 3 age groups can be recognized:

**1st year autumn/2nd year spring** with plumage similar to **adult**; tail and flight feathers with the same age, but sometimes with some **juvenile** wing coverts retained; central tail feather with the last dark shaft-streak like an "V" with the angle pointing to the tip; usually tail with five dark bars.

**2nd year autumn/3rd year spring** only in birds with partial first **postbreeding** moult, retaining some **juvenile** feathers on wing or tail.

**Adult** if all flight feathers are with the same generation, then recognizable by pattern of central tail feather, which is very variable being completely dark or may have heavily mottled tip but rarely "V" shaft-streak; if there are two generations of flight feathers, then differences in wear and pattern are very little; usually tail with four dark bars.



Short-eared Owl. Ageing. Pattern of central tail feather: left adult; right juvenile.

## MOULT

Complete **postbreeding** moult, usually finished in November. Partial **postjuvenile** moult involving only body feathers and lesser and median wing coverts; flight and tail feathers are changed in the first **postbreeding** moult. **CAUTION:** some birds, both **adults** and **2nd year**, arrest moult of flight feathers being then partial.



**272 Short-eared Owl**

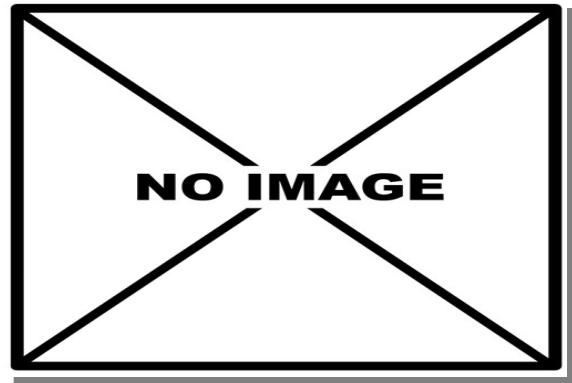
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**PHENOLOGY**

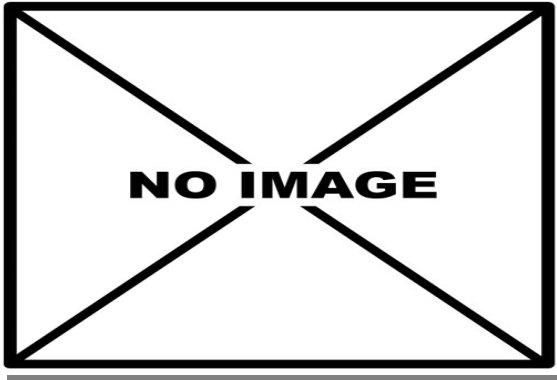
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII

**STATUS IN ARAGON**

Wintering and in passage birds, with some scarce records of breeding pairs. Related with open woodland areas, near wet places.



Short-eared Owl. 2nd year spring. Male ().



Short-eared Owl. Adult. Female ().



Short-eared Owl. 2nd year spring. Female (15-I).



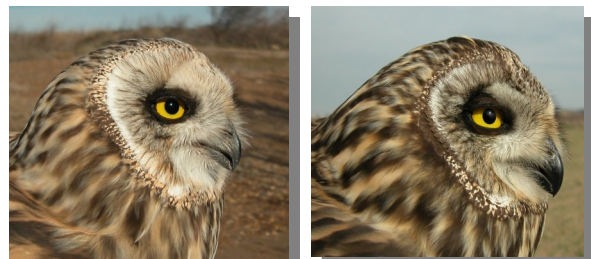
Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring. Male (04-II).



Short-eared Owl. Adult. Head pattern: left male (22-I); right female ().



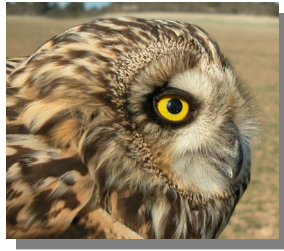
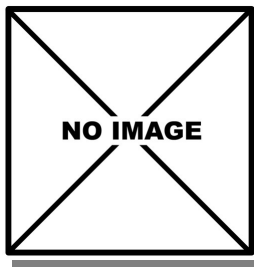
Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring. Female (28-II).



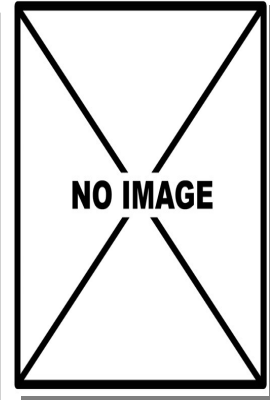
Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring. Head pattern: left male (04-II); right female (21-II).

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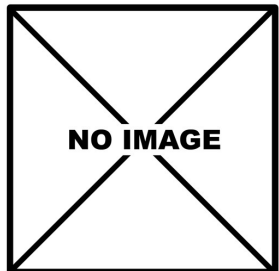
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Short-eared Owl. 2nd year spring. Head pattern: left male (); right female (15-I).



Short-eared Owl. Adult. Breast pattern: left male (22-I); right female ().



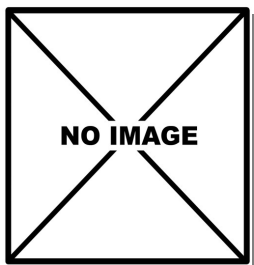
Short-eared Owl. Adult. Pattern of facial disk: left male (22-I); right female ().



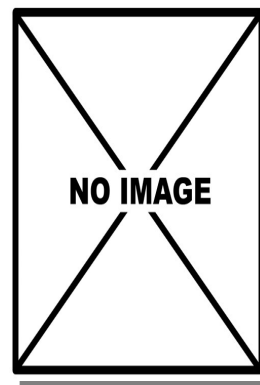
Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring. Breast pattern: left male (04-II); right female (21-II).



Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring. Pattern of facial disk: left male (04-II); right female (21-II).



Short-eared Owl. 2nd year spring. Pattern of facial disk: left male (); right female (15-I).

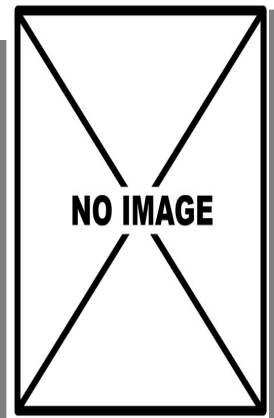
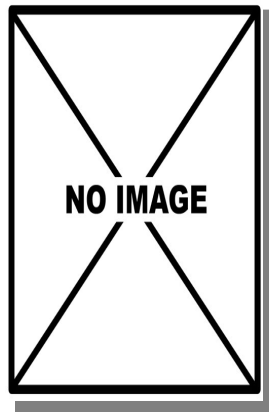


Short-eared Owl. 2nd year spring. Breast pattern: left male (); right female (15-I).



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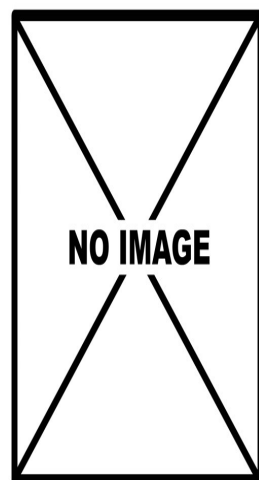
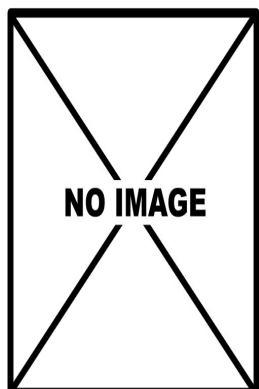
Short-eared Owl. Adult. Upperpart pattern: left male (22-I); right female ().

Short-eared Owl. Adult. Tail pattern: left male (22-I); right female ().



Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring. Upperpart pattern: left male (04-II); right female (21-II).

Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring. Tail pattern with retained juvenile feathers: left male (04-II); right female (21-II).



Short-eared Owl. 2nd year spring. Upperpart pattern: left male (); right female (15-I).

Short-eared Owl. 2nd year spring. Tail pattern: left male (); right female (15-I).

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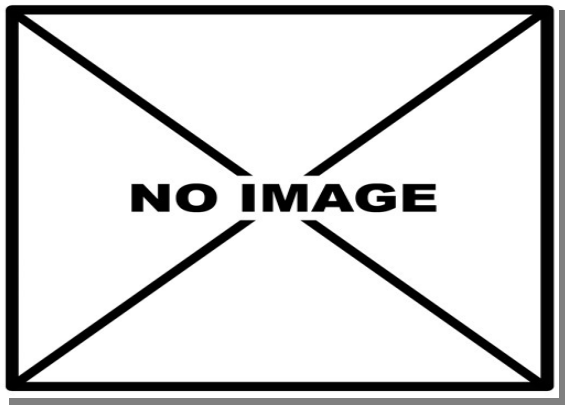
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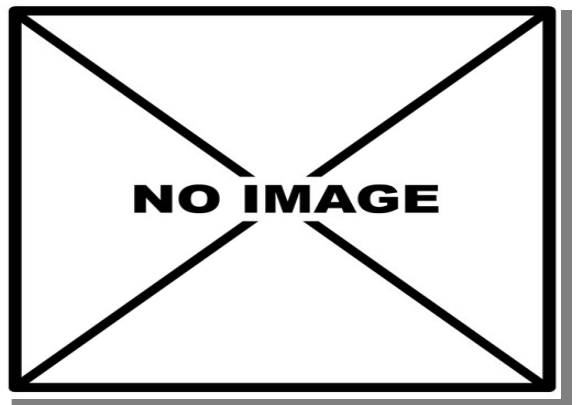
Short-eared Owl. Adult. Male: pattern of primary coverts (22-I).



Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring. Female: pattern of primary coverts (28-II).



Short-eared Owl. Adult. Female: pattern of primary coverts ().



Short-eared Owl. 2nd year spring. Male: pattern of primary coverts ().



Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring. Male: pattern of primary coverts (04-II).

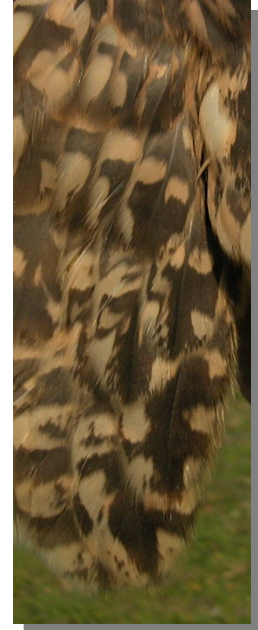
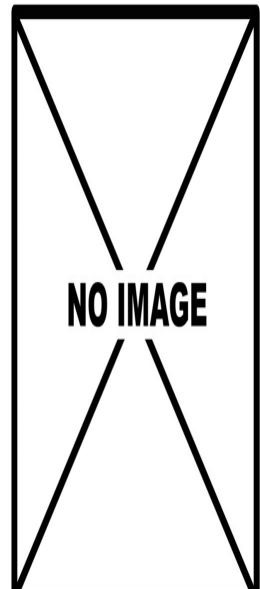
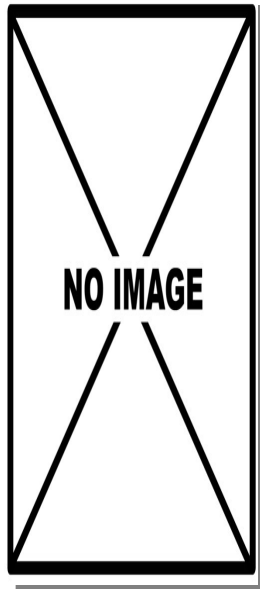


Short-eared Owl. 2nd year spring. Female: pattern of primary coverts (15-I).



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Short-eared Owl. Adult. Pattern of tertials: left male (22-I); right female ().

Short-eared Owl. 2nd year spring. Pattern of tertials: left male (); right female (15-I).

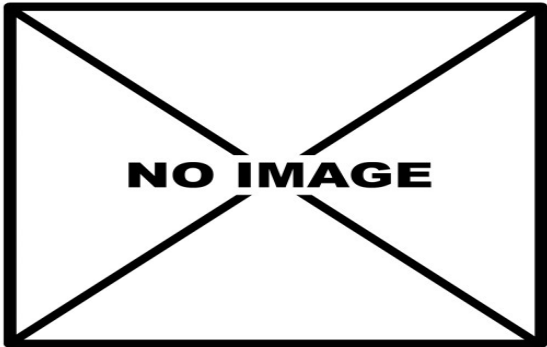
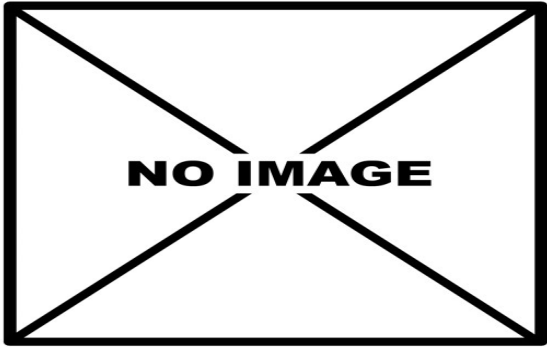


Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring. Pattern of tertials: left male (04-II); right female with retained juvenile feather (21-II).

Short-eared Owl. Adult. Male: pattern of primaries (22-I).

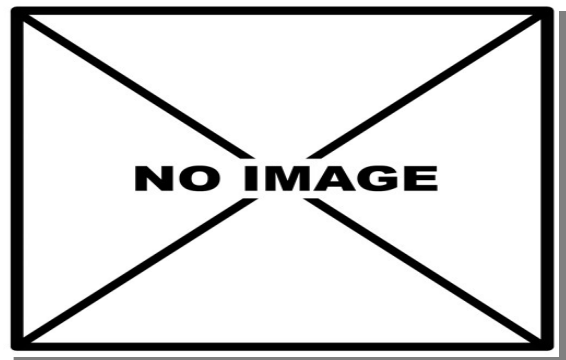
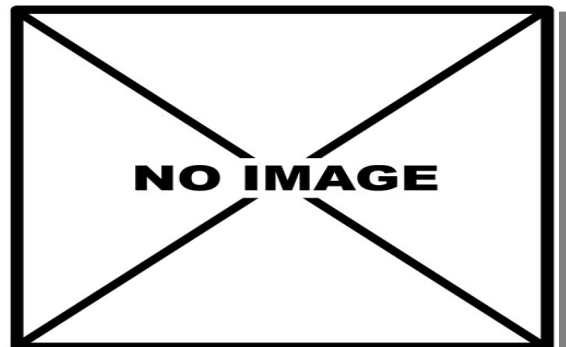
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Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring. Female: pattern of primaries (28-II).

Short-eared Owl. Adult. Female: pattern of primaries ().



Short-eared Owl. 2nd year spring. Male: pattern of primaries ().

Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring. Male: pattern of primaries (04-II).

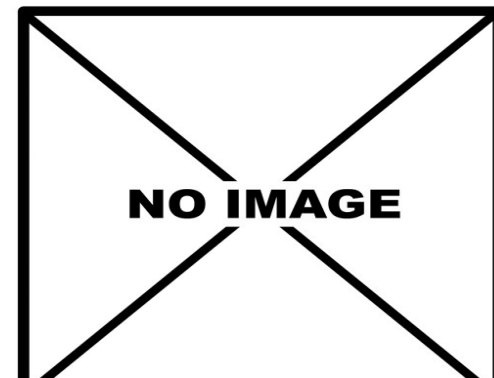
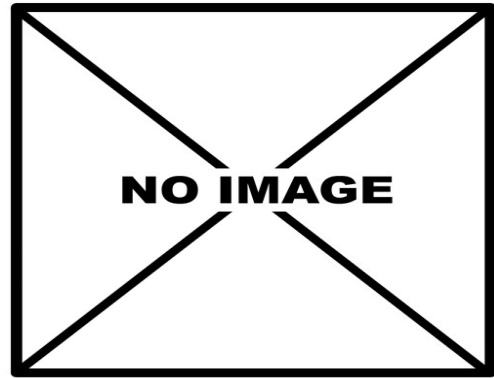


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Short-eared Owl. 2nd year spring. Female: pattern of primaries (15-I).



Short-eared Owl. Adult. Female: pattern of secondaries ().



Short-eared Owl. Adult. Male: pattern of secondaries (22-I).

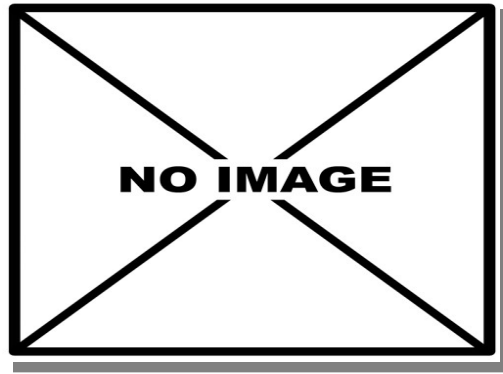
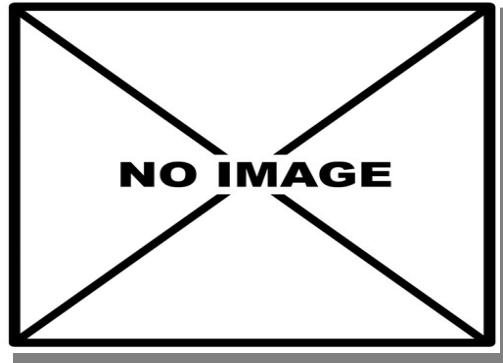


Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring. Male: pattern of secondaries (04-II).



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Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring with complete moult. Female: pattern of secondaries (28-II).

Short-eared Owl. 2nd year spring. Male: pattern of secondaries ().



Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring with arrested moult. Female: pattern of secondaries (1 juvenile feather) (04-V).

Short-eared Owl. 2nd year spring. Female: pattern of secondaries (15-I).



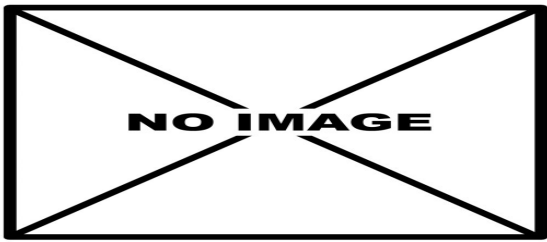
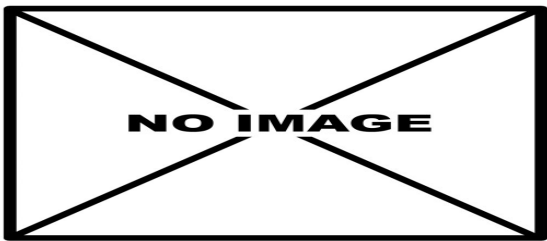
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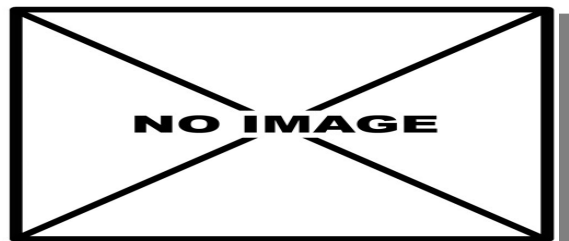
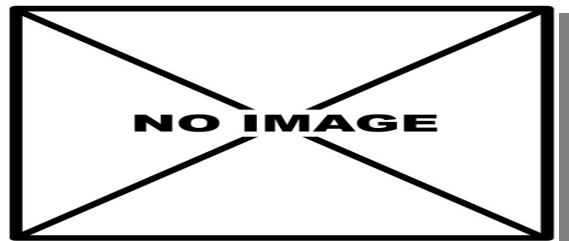
Short-eared Owl. Adult. Male: pattern of wing (22-I).

Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring with complete moult. Female: pattern of wing (28-II).



Short-eared Owl. Adult. Female: pattern of wing ().

Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring with arrested moult. Female: pattern of wing (1 juvenile feather) (04-V).

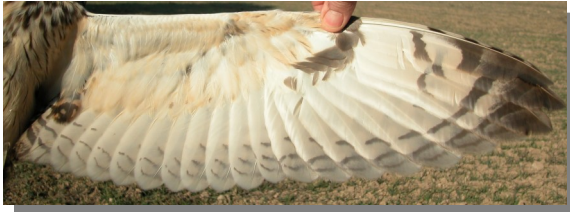


Short-eared Owl. 3rd year spring. Male: pattern of wing (04-II).

Short-eared Owl. 2nd year spring. Male: pattern of wing ().

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Short-eared Owl. 2nd year spring. Female: pattern of wing (15-I).