



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Male (06-XII).

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER
(*Dendrocopos major*)

IDENTIFICATION

20-25 cm. Black upperparts, with white patches on “shoulders”; white throat and breast; red undertail coverts; dark wings with white spotted; black tail with outer feathers white barred; red nape on **male**; black on **female**; black crown on **adults** and red in **juveniles**.



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Pattern of upperparts and undertail coverts.

SIMILAR SPECIES

Recalls a **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** which is smaller (14-16 cm), lacks white patches on “shoulders” and without red colour on undertail coverts..



Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.

AGEING

5 age groups can be recognized:

Juvenile with red crown edged black; black nape; primaries with white spots on tips; dull red undertail coverts; tip of the outermost tail feathers narrow and pointed.

1st year autumn/2nd year spring with body feathers and primaries similar to **adult** but dark black lesser, median and inner greater coverts moulted contrasting with duller **juvenile** primary coverts and outer greater coverts.

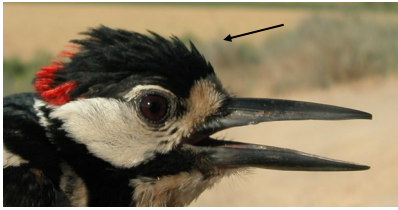
2nd year autumn/3rd year spring only if unmoulted **juvenile** primary coverts have been retained, which will be more brown and pointed than the **adult**-type neighbors; sometimes with some **juvenile** secondary retained more worn and bleached than moulted ones and then with line of distal white marks in secondaries not straight.

3rd year autumn/4th year spring only some birds with retained **juvenile** primary coverts, which will be very brown and eroded.

Adult with all wing coverts plain bright black, without moult limits (**CAUTION:** sometimes with some primary covert retained which will have rounded tip); black crown in **females** and with red feathers only on back crown in **males**; primaries without white spots on tips; intense red undertail coverts; tips of the outermost tail feathers wide and rounded.



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Ageing. Female: top adult; bottom juvenile.



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Ageing. Male. Pattern of crown: top adult; bottom juvenile.



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Ageing. Pattern of the outermost tail feather: left adult; right juvenile.



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Ageing. Colour of undertail coverts: left adult; right juvenile.



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Ageing. Pattern of tip of primaries: top adult; bottom juvenile.

SEXING

Adult male with a red patch on nape. **Adult female** with nape uniform bluish-black. **Juveniles** may be sexed only in extreme birds: **male** with red patch on crown longer than 25 mm; without or with very narrow black band above the eye. **Female** with red patch on crown shorter than 23 mm; with broad black band above the eye.



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Sexing. Adult. Pattern of crown: top male; bottom female.



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Sexing. Juvenile. Pattern of crown: top male; bottom female.



MOULT

Complete **postbreeding** moult, usually finished in October; sometimes some primary coverts may be retained. Partial **postjuvenile** moult involving body feathers, lesser and median coverts, primaries and tail; sometimes some inner greater coverts and some outer primary coverts can be moulted; all or outer greater coverts, all or inner primary coverts, secondaries and tertials remain unmoulted; generally finished in November.

PHENOLOGY

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

- Summer visitor ■ Resident
- Wintering ■ On passage



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Male (23-VII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Female (29-VI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Female (11-VII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 2nd year. Male (16-VI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Head pattern and iris colour: top male (06-XII); bottom female (29-VI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 1st year. Female (19-XI).



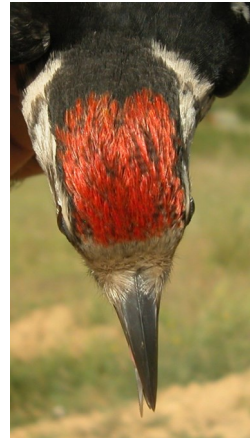
Great Spotted Woodpecker. 1st/2nd year. Head pattern and iris colour: top male (16-VI); bottom female (19-XI).



08760 Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*) 



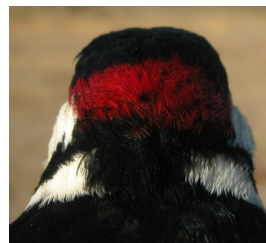
Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Head pattern and iris colour: top male (23-VII); bottom female (11-VII).



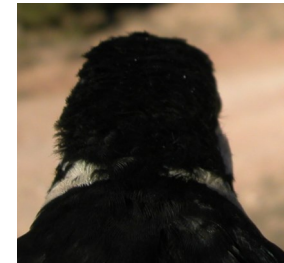
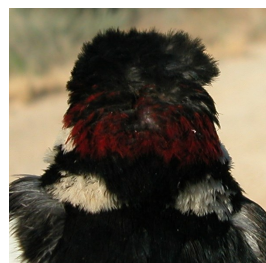
Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Crown pattern: left male (23-VII); right female (11-VII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Crown pattern: left male (06-XII); right female (29-VI)



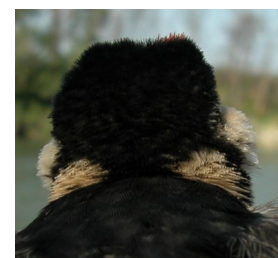
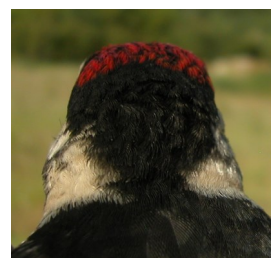
Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Nape pattern: left male (06-XII); right female (29-VI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 1st/2nd year. Nape pattern: left male (16-VI); right female ().



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 1st/2nd year. Crown pattern: left male (16-VI); right female (19-XI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Nape pattern: left male (23-VII); right female (11-VII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Breast pattern: left male (06-XII); right female (29-VI).



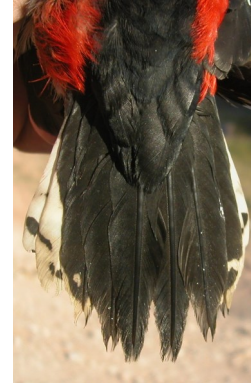
Great Spotted Woodpecker. 1st/2nd year. Breast pattern: left male (16-VI); right female (19-XI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Breast pattern: left male (23-VII); right female (11-VII).



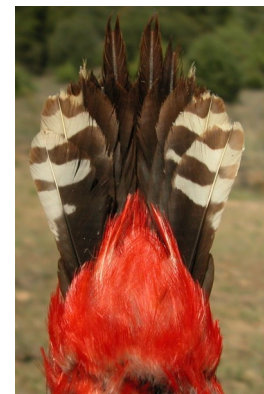
Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Tail pattern: left male (06-XII); right female (25-V).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 1st/2nd year. Tail pattern: left male (16-VI); right female (19-XI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Tail pattern: left male (23-VII); right female (11-VII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Pattern of undertail coverts: left male (06-XII); right female (25-V).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 1st/2nd year. Pattern of undertail coverts: left male (16-VI); right female (19-XI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Pattern of undertail coverts: left male (23-VII); right female (11-VII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Upperparts pattern: left male (06-XII); right female (29-VI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 1st/2nd year. Upperparts pattern: left male (16-VI); right female (19-XI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Upperparts pattern: left male (23-VII); right female (11-VII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Male: pattern of primary coverts with all feathers moulted (06-XII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Male: pattern of primary coverts with retained feathers (27-II).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Female: pattern of primary coverts with all feathers moulted (29-VI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Female: pattern of primary coverts with retained feathers (29-VI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 3rd year. Male: pattern of primary coverts with retained juvenile feathers (05-VII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 2nd year. Male: pattern of primary coverts (16-VI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 1st year. Female: pattern of primary coverts (19-XI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Male: pattern of primary coverts (23-VII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Female: pattern of primary coverts (05-VII).



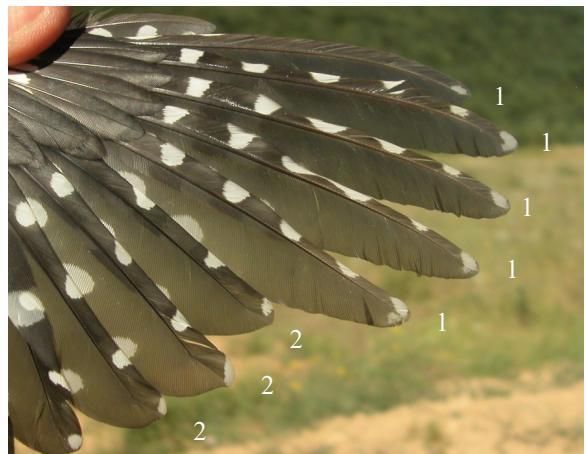
Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Male: pattern of primaries (06-XII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 1st year. Female: pattern of primaries (19-XI).



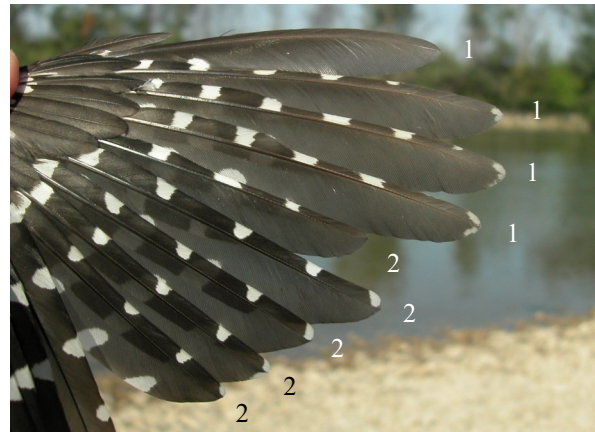
Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Female: pattern of primaries (25-V).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Male: pattern of primaries (1 juvenile feather, 2 postjuvenile feather) (23-VII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 2nd year. Male: pattern of primaries (16-VI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Female: pattern of primaries (1 juvenile feather, 2 postjuvenile feather) (11-VII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Male: pattern of secondaries (06-XII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 2nd year. Male: pattern of secondaries (16-VI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Female: pattern of secondaries (29-VI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 1st year. Female: pattern of secondaries (19-XI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 3rd year. Male: pattern of secondaries with all feathers moulted (05-VII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Male: pattern of secondaries (23-VII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Female: pattern of secondaries (11-VII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Male: pattern of wing (06-XII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Female: pattern of wing (25-V).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 3rd year. Male: pattern of wing (05-VII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 2nd year. Male: pattern of wing (16-VI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. 1st year. Female: pattern of wing (19-XI).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Male: pattern of wing (23-VII).



Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Female: pattern of wing (11-VII).