

# 08760 Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*)



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

4 age groups can be recognised:

**Juvenile** with reddish crown edged black; black nape; outer primaries with white patch on tip; undertail-coverts dull red; tip of the outermost tail feathers narrow and pointed.

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

**2nd year autumn/3rd year spring** only in some birds that have retained unmoulted **juvenile** primary coverts, which are extremely bleached and worn (**CAUTION**: some **adults** may have similar feathers).

**Adult** with all wing coverts uniform glossy black, without moult limits (**CAUTION**: sometimes there are some retained primary coverts, which will have a rounded tip); black crown in **females** and **males** with red only on the nape; tip of outer primaries without white patch; undertail-coverts deep red; tip of the outermost tail feathers broad and rounded.

**CAUTION**: both some **3rd year autumn/4th year spring** birds which have retained primary coverts and **adults** which have also retained them for 2 consecutive moults will have them very brown and worn.

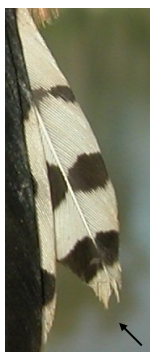


Great Spotted Woodpecker. Ageing. Female: top adult; bottom juvenile.

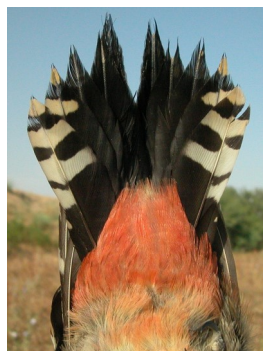
# 08760 Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*)



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.



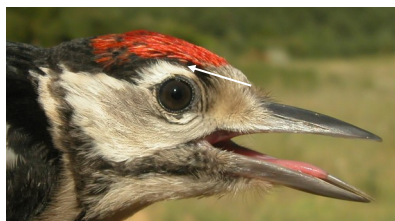
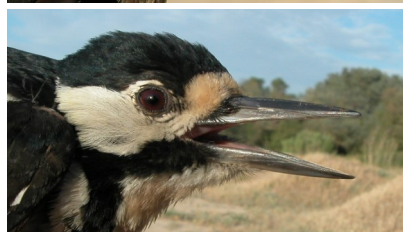
Great Spotted Woodpecker. Ageing. Pattern of tip of primaries: top adult; bottom juvenile.

## SEXING

**Adult male** with red patch on nape. **Adult female** with uniform bluish-black nape. **Juveniles** can be sexed only in extreme cases: **male** with red patch on crown longer than 25 mm; with no or very narrow black band above the eye. **Female** with red patch on crown shorter than 23 mm; with a 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 for one or more consecutive moults. Partial **postjuvenile** moult including body feathers, lesser and median coverts, primaries and tail feathers; sometimes some inner greater coverts and some outer primary coverts may be moulted; remain unmoulted all or the outer greater coverts, all or the inner primary coverts, secondaries and tertials; generally completed in November. **2nd year** birds have a **postbreeding** moult similar to that of the **adult** but some **juvenile** inner secondaries, median coverts ...



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## MOULT

... and primary coverts may still be retained; occasionally one or two **juvenile** primary coverts may be retained for a further year.

## PHENOLOGY

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

■ Summer visitor    ■ Resident  
■ Wintering        ■ On passage



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



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



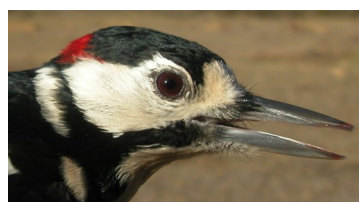
Great Spotted Woodpecker. 1st year. Female (19-XI).



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



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



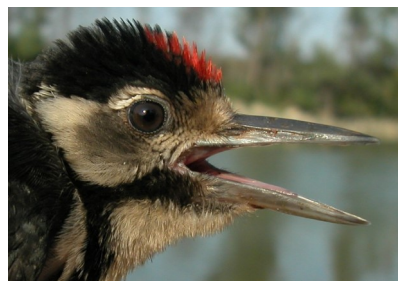
Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Head pattern and iris colour: top male (06-XII); bottom female (29-VI).



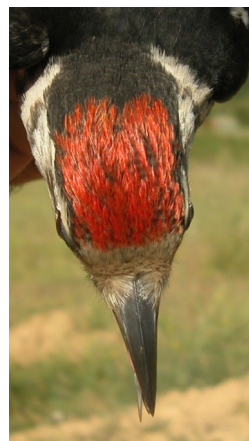
Great Spotted Woodpecker. 1st/2nd year. Head pattern and iris colour: top male (16-VI); bottom female (19-XI).



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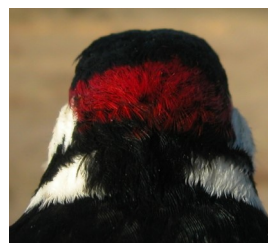
Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Head pattern and iris colour: top male (23-VII); bottom female (11-VII).



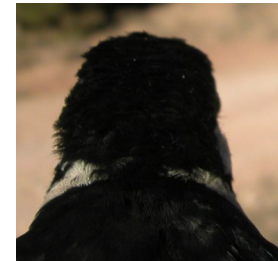
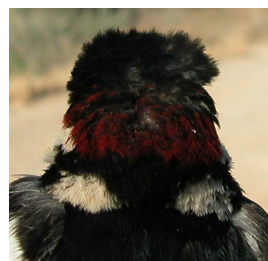
Great Spotted Woodpecker. Juvenile. Crown pattern: left male (23-VII); right female (11-VII).



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



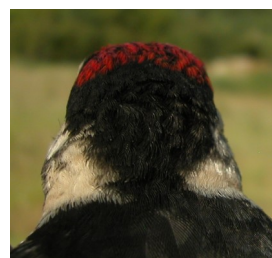
Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Nape pattern: left male (06-XII); right female (29-VI).



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



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).



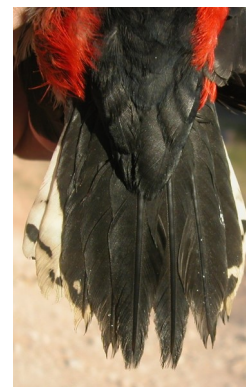
Great Spotted Woodpecker. 1st/2nd year. Breast pattern: left male (16-VI); right female (19-XI).



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).

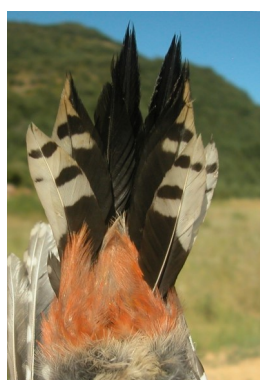


Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Pattern of undertail coverts: left male (06-XII); right female (25-V).





Great Spotted Woodpecker. 1st/2nd year. Pattern of under-tail 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).



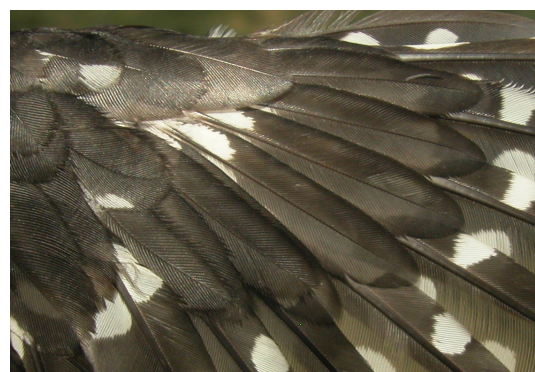
Great Spotted Woodpecker. 3rd year. Male: pattern of primary coverts with retained juvenile feathers (05-VII).



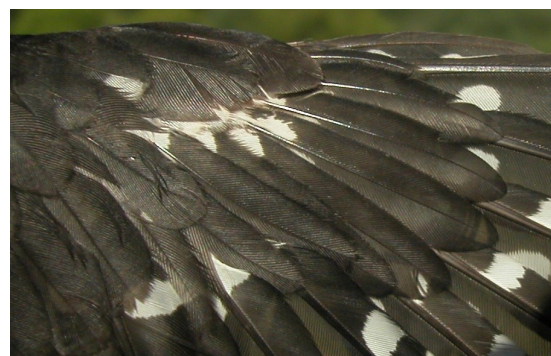
Great Spotted Woodpecker. 2nd year. Male: pattern of primary coverts (16-VI).



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).

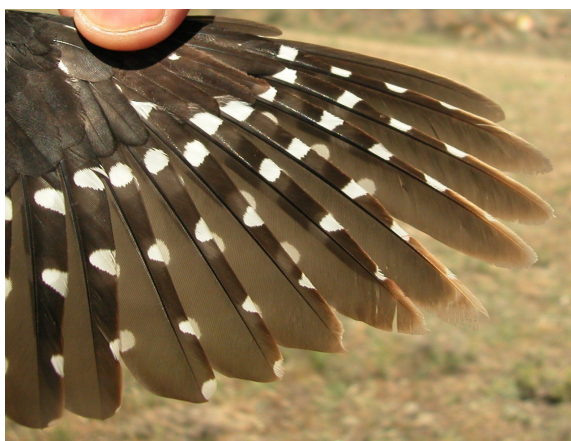




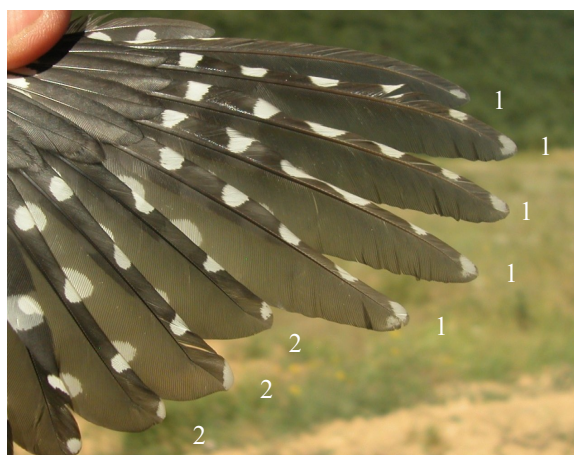
Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Male: pattern of primaries (06-XII).



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



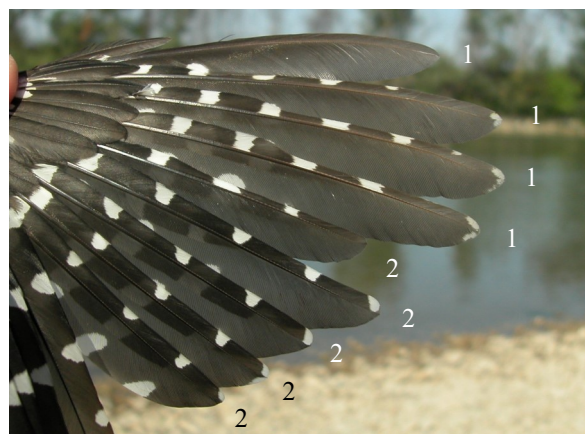
Great Spotted Woodpecker. Adult. Female: pattern of primaries (25-V).



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).