

09920 Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)



Barn Swallow. Spring. Adult. Male (29-III).

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*)

IDENTIFICATION

17-20 cm. Dark metallic blue upperparts; deep chestnut forehead and throat; pale underparts; very long outermost tail feathers.



Barn Swallow: pattern of head, tail and rump.

SIMILAR SPECIES

Recalls a **Red-rumped Swallow**, which has pale rump and neck band, lacking chestnut on the head. **House Martin** lacks chestnut on the head and has a white rump.



Red-rumped Swallow



House Martin

SEXING

Sexes with very similar plumage, but **females** usually duller and with the outermost tail feathers shorter than **males**. Since this species has a very variable size throughout Europe, it is not possible to give measurements if the geographical origin of the specimen is unknown. **Juveniles** cannot be sexed. **CAUTION:** some males, mainly in autumn, have broken the outermost tail feathers resembling a **female** tail.

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Barn Swallow. Sexing. Length of the outermost tail feathers: left male; right female.

AGEING

3 age groups can be recognized:

Juvenile with very pale forehead and throat; short and rounded outermost tail feathers; dull plumage.

1st year usually with **adult-like** moulted feathers on throat and forehead from August, but with **juvenile** outermost tail feathers.

Adult with deep chesnut forehead and throat; long and pointed outermost tail feathers; dark metallic blue plumage.

In **spring**, after the **postbreeding/postjuvenile** moults, ageing is not possible using plumage pattern.



Barn Swallow. Ageing. Pattern of breast: left adult; right juvenile.



Barn Swallow. Ageing. Length of the outermost tail feathers: left adult; right juvenile/1st year.

MOULT

Complete **postbreeding** and **postjuvenile** moults, which can start in breeding places and finish in wintering quarters or start in winter.

PHENOLOGY

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

- Summer visitor
- Resident
- Wintering
- On passage



Barn Swallow. Spring. Adult. Female (29-III).

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Barn Swallow. Spring. Juvenile (26-VI).



Barn Swallow. Spring. Head pattern: top adult male (29-III); middle adult female (29-III); bottom juvenile (26-VI).



Barn Swallow. Spring. Pattern of breast and chestnut patches on throat: top left adult male (29-III); top right adult female (29-III); left juvenile (26-VI).



Barn Swallow. Spring. Length of the outermost tail feathers: top left adult male (29-III); top right adult female (29-III); left juvenile (26-VI).

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Barn Swallow. Spring. Adult. Male: pattern of wing (16-III).



Barn Swallow. Spring. Adult. Female: pattern of wing (16-III).



Barn Swallow. Spring. Juvenile: pattern of wing (26-VI).



Barn Swallow. Spring. Upperpart pattern: top left adult male (29-III); top right adult female (29-III); left juvenile (26-VI).



Barn Swallow. Autumn. Adult. Male (24-VIII).



Barn Swallow. Autumn. Adult. Female (24-VIII).

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Barn Swallow. Autumn. 1st year (24-VIII).



Barn Swallow. Autumn. Breast pattern: top left adult male (24-VIII); top right adult female (24-VIII); left 1st year (24-VIII).



Barn Swallow. Autumn. Head pattern: top adult male (24-VIII); middle adult female (24-VIII); bottom 1st year (24-VIII).



Barn Swallow. Autumn. Length of the outermost tail feathers: top left adult male (24-VIII); top right adult female (24-VIII); left 1st year (24-VIII).



Barn Swallow. Autumn. Upperpart pattern: top left adult male (24-VIII); top right adult female (24-VIII); left 1st year (24-VIII).



Barn Swallow. Autumn. Adult. Male: pattern of wing (24-VIII).



Barn Swallow. Autumn. Adult. Female: pattern of wing (24-VIII).



Barn Swallow. Autumn. 1st year: pattern of wing (24-VIII).