

336 Northern Wheatear

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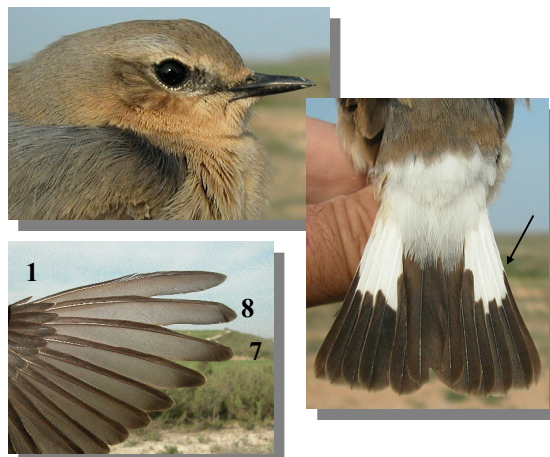
Wheatear. Spring. Adult. Male (01-V).

NORTHERN WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe oenanthe*)

IDENTIFICATION

14-15 cm. **Male** with grey upperparts; black wings; white forehead and black bands on both sides of the head; white underparts. **Female** with brown grey upperparts; brown wings; rufous underparts. Both sexes with central tail feathers black and dark terminal band; 10th primary similar or shorter than primary coverts; 7th to 8th primaries emarginated.

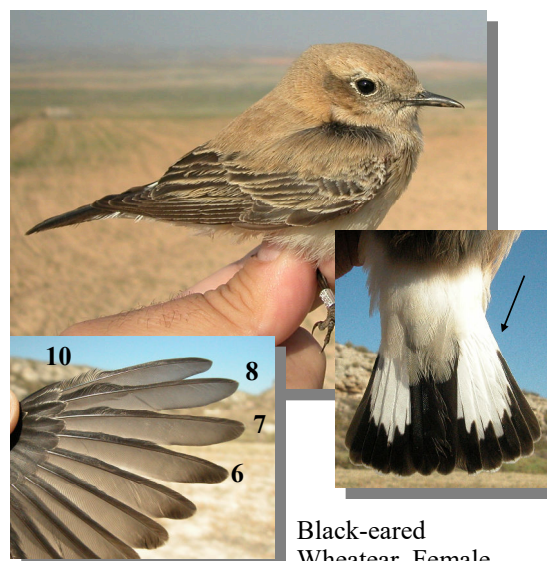
Wheatear. Spring.
Male: pattern of
upperparts.



Wheatear. Female: pattern of head, tail and wing formula.

SIMILAR SPECIES

Male is unmistakable. **Female** recalls a **Black-eared Wheatear**, with band on tail feathers broader on sides; 10th primary longer than primary coverts; 6th to 8th primaries emarginated.

Black-eared
Wheatear. Female

SEXING

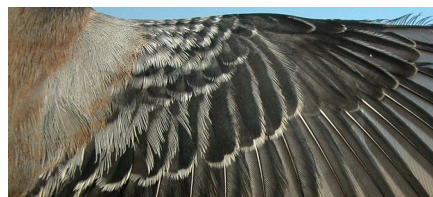
Male with black ear-coverts; white supercilium; black flight feathers and wing coverts. **Female** with brown ear-coverts; creamy supercilium; brown flight feathers and wing coverts. **Juveniles** and **1st year** birds cannot be sexed using plumage pattern.

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Wheatear.
Spring. Sexing.
Pattern of head:
top male; bot-
tom female.



Wheatear.
Autumn.
Sexing.
Pattern of
wing co-
verts: top
male; bot-
tom fe-
male.



Wheatear. Spring. Sexing. Pattern of wing coverts:
top male; bottom female.

AGEING

4 age groups can be recognized:

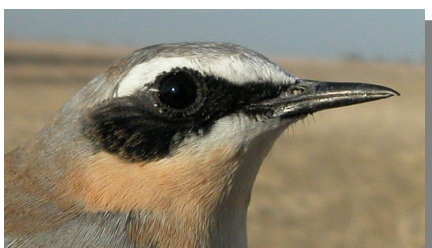
Juvenile with fresh plumage; upperparts speckled pale; feathers of underparts edged dark; inside of upper mandible yellow.

1st year autumn with moult limit sometimes difficult to see due to few feathers involved; check differences between darker median and paler greater coverts; sometimes moult limit is within the innermost and outer greater coverts; inside of upper mandible partially yellow.

2nd year spring with flight and tail feathers and outer greater coverts bleached and very worn; some birds still with little yellow on the inside of upper mandible.

Adult in **autumn** without moult limit on wing feathers; in **spring** with flight and tail feathers and outer greater coverts less worn than in **2nd year**; always with dark colour inside of upper mandible.

(CAUTION: in **spring**, after **prebreeding** moult, ageing **females** is often difficult because there may be moult limits in both **2nd year** and **adult**).



Wheatear.
Autumn.
Sexing.
Pattern of
head: top
male; bot-
tom fe-
male.



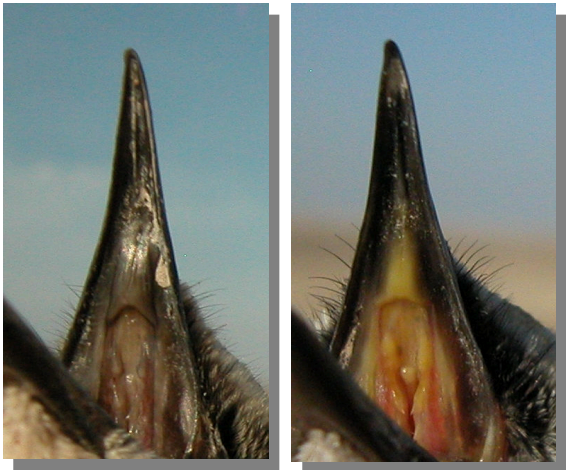
Wheatear. Ageing. Wear of plumage: left adult fe-
male; right juvenile.

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Wheatear. Spring. Ageing. Wear of tail coverts: left adult; right 2nd year.



Wheatear. Autumn. Ageing. Colour inside of upper mandible: left adult; right juvenile/1st year.



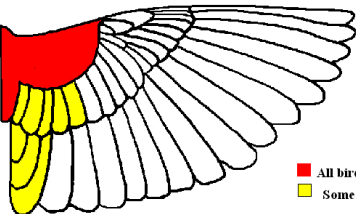
Wheatear. Spring. Male. Ageing. Pattern of wing coverts: top adult; bottom 2nd year.



Wheatear. Spring. Female. Ageing. Pattern of wing coverts: top adult; bottom 2nd year.

MOULT

September. Partial **postjuvenile** moult involving body feathers and lesser and median wing coverts; some birds moult tertials and inner greater coverts; finished in early October. Both age classes have a **prebreeding** moult including body feathers and sometimes a few innermost greater coverts and some lesser and median coverts or tertials.



Wheatear. Extent of postjuvenile moult.

PHENOLOGY

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

STATUS IN ARAGON

Summer visitor. Widely distributed throughout the Region, absent in the arid Ebro Basin.

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Wheatear. Spring. Adult. Female (03-IV).



Wheatear. Spring. Juvenile (22-VI)



Wheatear. Spring. 2nd year. Male (20-VI).



Wheatear.
Spring.
Adult. Head
pattern: top
male (01-V);
bottom fe-
male (03-IV).



Wheatear.
Spring.
Head pat-
tern: top 2nd
year male
(20-VI);
middle 2nd
year female
(20-VI);
bottom juve-
nile (16-
VII).



Wheatear. Spring. 2nd year. Female (20-VI).

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Wheatear. Spring. Adult. Breast pattern: left male (01-V); right female (03-IV).



Wheatear. Spring. Breast pattern: top left 2nd year male (20-VI); top right 2nd year female (20-VI); left juvenile (16-VII).



Wheatear. Spring. Adult. Upperparts pattern: left male (01-V); right female (03-IV).



Wheatear. Spring. Upperparts pattern: top left 2nd year male (20-VI); top right 2nd year female (20-VI); left juvenile (16-VII).



Wheatear. Spring. Adult. Tail pattern: left male (01-V); right female (03-IV).

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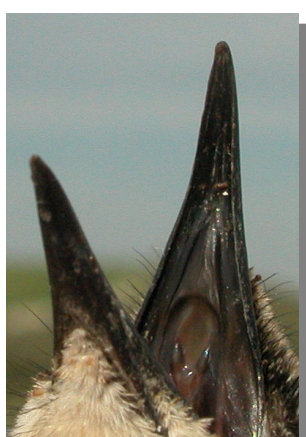
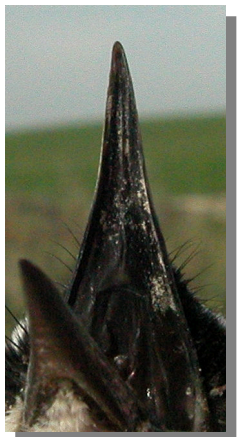
Wheatear. Spring. Adult. Male: pattern of wing (28-IV).



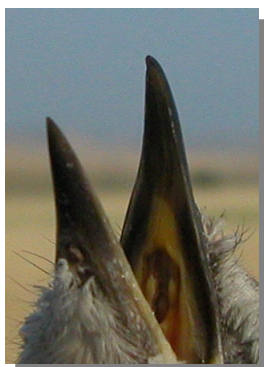
Wheatear. Spring. Tail pattern: top left 2nd year male (20-VI); top right 2nd year female (20-VI); left juvenile (16-VII).



Wheatear. Spring. Adult. Female: pattern of wing (03-IV).



Wheatear. Spring. 2nd year. Male: pattern of wing (20-VI).



Wheatear. Spring. Colour inside of upper mandible: top left adult/2nd year (14-IV); top right 2nd year (14-IV); left juvenile (16-VII)..



Wheatear. Spring. 2nd year. Female: pattern of wing (20-VI).

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Wheatear. Wheatear. Spring. Juvenile: pattern of wing (22-VI).



Wheatear. Autumn. 1st year (02-IX)



Wheatear. Autumn. Adult. Male (02-IX)



Wheatear. Autumn. Head pattern: top adult male (02-IX); middle adult female (02-IX); bottom 1st year (02-IX).



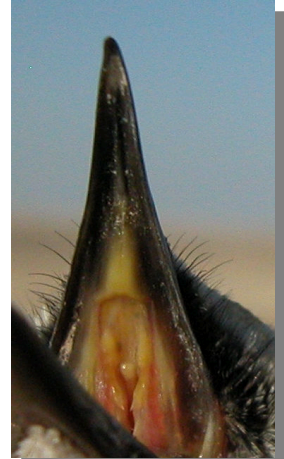
Wheatear. Autumn. Adult. Female (02-IX)

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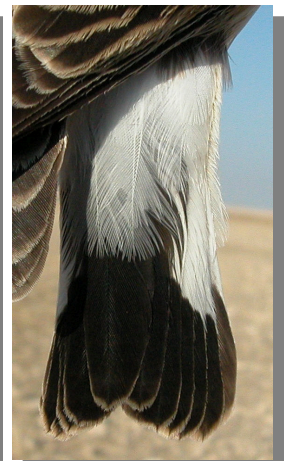
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Wheatear. Autumn. Breast pattern: top left adult male (02-IX); top right adult female (02-IX); left 1st year (02-IX).



Wheatear. Autumn. Colour inside of upper mandible: left adult (02-IX); right 1st year (02-IX).



Wheatear. Autumn. Tail wear: left adult (02-IX); right 1st year (02-IX).



Wheatear. Autumn. Upperparts pattern: top left adult male (02-IX); top right adult female (02-IX); left 1st year (02-IX).



Wheatear. Autumn. Adult. Male: pattern of wing (02-IX).

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Wheatear. Autumn. Adult. Female: pattern of wing (02-IX).



Wheatear. Autumn. 1st year: pattern of wing (02-IX).