

15910 House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)



House Sparrow. Spring. Male (03-IV).

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*)

IDENTIFICATION

14-15 cm. General dun coloration, with chestnut upperparts and grey-brown underparts. **Male** with chestnut head and grey crown; black bib. **Female** with cutting edge of upper mandible less curved; gape point ending slightly before eye; squared forehead; diffuse supercilium only behind the eye, grey-browed coloured; ear-coverts grey-sand coloured, pale and with great contrast with supercilium; shaft streaks on crown feathers pale and uniform; breast without faint darkish streaks and dots; flanks without diffuse streaked, mantle sides with darker and worse-pronounced tramlines; uppertail coverts and rump feathers usually without faint darkish shaft streaks; undertail coverts with narrow greyish centres often almost restricted to shaft area; tertials with more brown-reddish edges; lower scapulars with largely blackish-brown inner webs contrasting with buff-sandy outers, tips of median wing coverts no very white. **Juveniles** very similar to **female**.



House Sparrow. Winter. Pattern of head and crown.



House Sparrow. Spring. Male. Pattern of head, crown and flank.



House Sparrow. Female. Pattern of head, breast, feathers of crown, flank, upperpart, undertail coverts, tertials, uppertail coverts and wing median coverts.

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SIMILAR SPECIES

Female looks like a female **Chaffinch**, with white on shoulders and tail.. The **male** recalls a **Tree Sparrow**, which is smaller, has black cheek and lacks grey on head. The **male** looks like to the **Spanish Sparrow** one, but easy to separte in **spring** due to his chesnut crown and streaked flanks, but more difficult in **winter** since these differences are hidden; **females** of both species are very similar and frecuently indistinguisable dute to overlap of characteres: typical **Spanish Sparrow female** can be recognized by bill long and broad-based; cutting edge of upper mandible curved; gape point roughly level with fore edge of eye, steeper-sloping forehead; broad supercilium both before and behind the eye, pale cream coloured; ear-coverts dark grey, contrasting less with supercilium; shaft streaks on crown feathers dark; breast usually with faint darkish streaks and dots; flanks with diffuse streaked; mantle sides with pale and pronounced tramlines; uppertail coverts and rump feathers usually with faint darkish shaft streaks; undertail coverts with diffuse greyish centres; tertials with pale edges merging slightly more with less blackish centres; lower scapulars with diffuse olive-brown inner webs and buffy outer webs; tips of median wing coverts very white

Chaffinch. Female



Tree Sparrow



Spanish Sparrow. Male. Top left pattern of head in spring; top right pattern of head in winter; left flank.



Spanish Sparrow. Female. Pattern of head, breast, feathers of crown, flank, upperpart, undertail coverts, tertials, uppertail coverts and wing median coverts.

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SEXING

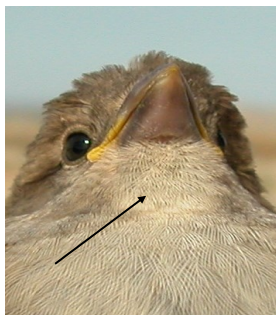
Male with chestnut and grey head, black bib and intense chestnut lesser coverts. **Female** with duller aspect, lacks black on throat and breast and lesser coverts are light brown. Some **juvenile males** can be sexed before moult because they have a dark patch on throat, but some also with pale throat like **females**.



House Sparrow. Spring. Adult. Sexing. Pattern of head: top male; bottom female.



House Sparrow. Winter. Adult. Sexing. Pattern of head: top male; bottom female.



House Sparrow. Juvenile. Sexing. Pattern of chin: left male; right male/female.



House Sparrow. Adult. Sexing. Pattern of wing coverts: top male; bottom female.

AGEING

3 types of age for **males** and 2 for **females** can be recognized:

Juvenile resembles a **female** but with loose feathers and least marked colours; with fresh feathers.

1st year autumn/2nd year spring only in **males** with proximal half of median coverts black, the distal half is white with black shaft; narrow brown edge on median alula; in **winter** colour of crown grey-brown and lores dark grey (**CAUTION**: differences in colour of feathers on head disappear with wear so they are not useful in **spring/summer**).

Adult female with worn and compact plumage, with contrasted colours in **spring/summer**. **Male** with proximal half of median coverts virtually all white, the distal half with white shaft; broad rufous edge on median alula; in **winter** with grey crown and black lores. After the **postbreeding/postjuvenile** moults, ageing **females** is not possible using plumage pattern.

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House Sparrow. Ageing. Wear of plumage: left adult female; right juvenile



House Sparrow. Male. Ageing. Pattern of alula: top adult; bottom 2nd year



House Sparrow. Male. Ageing. Pattern of median wing coverts: top adult; bottom 1st year



House Sparrow. Winter. Male. Ageing. Pattern of head: top adult; bottom 1st year



House Sparrow. Winter. Male. Ageing. Pattern of Crown: left adult; right 1st year

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MOULT

Complete **postbreeding** and **postjuvenile** moults, usually finished early November.

PHENOLOGY

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

- Summer visitor
- Wintering
- Resident
- On passage



House Sparrow. Spring. Juvenile. Male (19-VI).



House Sparrow. Spring. Juvenile. Male/female (28-VI).



House Sparrow. Spring. Female (23-IV).



House Sparrow. Spring. Head pattern: top adult male (03-IV); middle 2nd year male (03-IV); bottom female (23-IV).



House Sparrow. Spring. 2nd year. Male (03-IV).

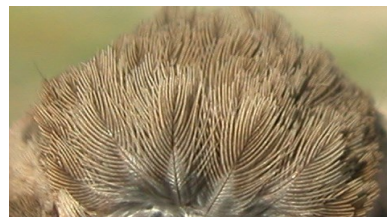
15910 House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)



House Sparrow. Spring. Juvenile. Head pattern: top male (19-VI); bottom male/female (28-VI).



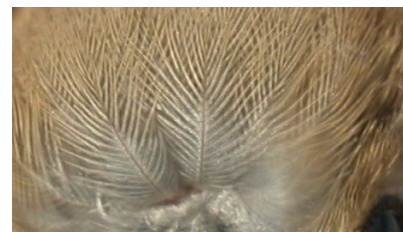
House Sparrow. Spring. Pattern of crown feathers: top adult male (03-IV); middle 2nd year male (03-IV); bottom female (23-IV).



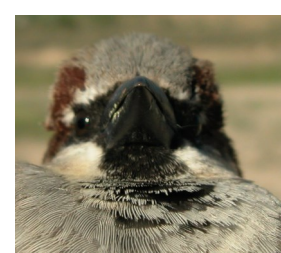
House Sparrow. Spring. Crown pattern: top adult male (03-IV); middle 2nd year male (03-IV); bottom female (23-IV).



House Sparrow. Spring. Juvenile. Pattern of crown feathers: top male (19-VI); bottom male/female (28-VI).



House Sparrow. Spring. Juvenile. Crown pattern: left male (19-VI); right male/female (28-VI).



House Sparrow. Spring. Bib pattern: top adult male (03-IV); middle 2nd year male (03-IV); bottom female (23-IV).

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House Sparrow. Spring. Juvenile. Bib pattern: left male (19-VI); right male/female (28-VI).



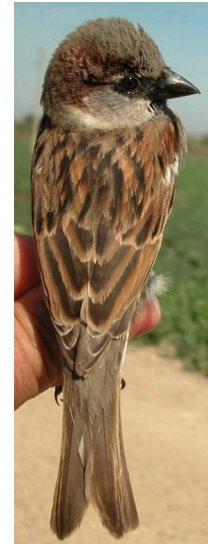
House Sparrow. Spring. Upperparts pattern: top adult male (03-IV); middle 2nd year male (03-IV); bottom female (23-IV).



House Sparrow. Spring. Breast pattern: top adult male (03-IV); middle 2nd year male (03-IV); bottom female (23-IV).



House Sparrow. Spring. Juvenile. Breast pattern: left male (19-VI); right male/female (28-VI).



House Sparrow. Spring. Juvenile. Upperparts pattern: left male (19-VI); right male/female (28-VI).



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House Sparrow. Spring. Tail pattern: top adult male (03-IV); middle 2nd year male (03-IV); bottom female (23-IV).



House Sparrow. Spring. Juvenile. Tail pattern: left male (19-VI); right male/female (28-VI).

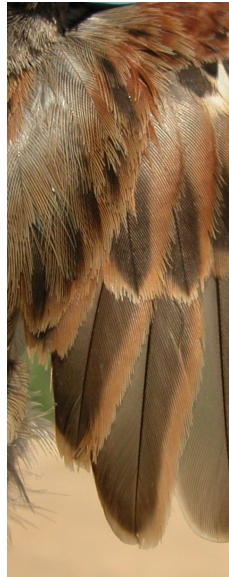


House Sparrow. Spring. Pattern of undertail coverts: top adult male (03-IV); middle 2nd year male (03-IV); bottom female (23-IV).



House Sparrow. Spring. Juvenile. Undertail pattern: left male (19-VI); right male/female (28-VI).

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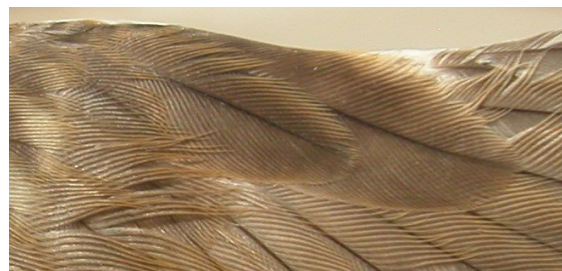
House Sparrow. Spring. Pattern of tertials: top adult male (03-IV); middle 2nd year male (03-IV); bottom female (23-IV).



House Sparrow. Spring. Pattern of alula: top adult male (03-IV); middle 2nd year male (03-IV); bottom female (23-IV)



House Sparrow. Spring. Juvenile. Uppertail pattern: left male (19-VI); right male/female (28-VI).



House Sparrow. Spring. Juvenile. Pattern of alula: top male (19-VI); bottom male/female (28-VI).

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House Sparrow. Spring. Pattern of median coverts: top adult male (03-IV); middle 2nd year male (03-IV); bottom female (23-IV).



House Sparrow. Spring. Juvenile. Pattern of median coverts: top male (19-VI); bottom male/female (28-VI).



House Sparrow. Spring. Adult. Male: pattern of wing (03-IV)



House Sparrow. Spring. 2nd year. Male: pattern of wing (03-IV)



House Sparrow. Spring. Female: pattern of wing (23-IV)



House Sparrow. Spring. Juvenile. Male: pattern of wing (19-VI).

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House Sparrow. Spring. Juvenile. Male/female: pattern of wing (28-VI).



House Sparrow. Winter. Adult. Male (14-XI).



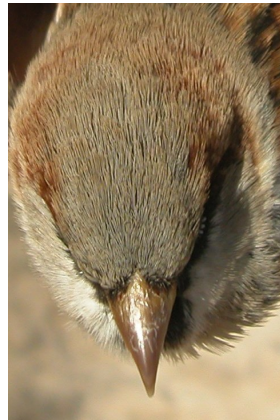
House Sparrow. Winter. 1st year. Male (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. Female (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. Head pattern: top adult male (14-XI); middle 1st year male (14-XI); bottom female (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. Crown pattern: top left adult male (14-XI); top right 1st year male (14-XI); left female (14-XI).

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House Sparrow. Winter. Pattern of Crown feathers: top adult male (14-XI); middle 1st year male (14-XI); bottom female (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. Breast pattern: top left adult male (14-XI); top right 1st year male (14-XI); left female (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. Upperparts pattern: top left adult male (14-XI); top right 1st year male (14-XI); left female (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. Bib pattern: top left adult male (14-XI); top right 1st year male (14-XI); left female (14-XI).

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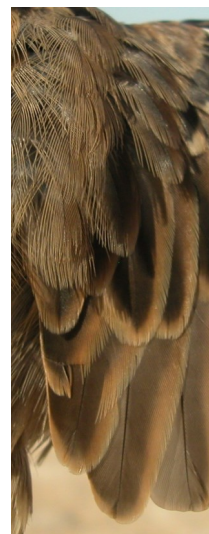
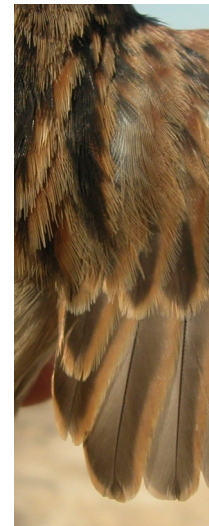
House Sparrow. Winter. Tail pattern: top left adult male (14-XI); top right 1st year male (14-XI); left female (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. Pattern of upper-tail coverts: top left adult male (14-XI); top right 1st year male (14-XI); left female (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. Pattern of under-tail coverts: top left adult male (14-XI); top right 1st year male (14-XI); left female (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. Pattern of tertials: top left adult male (14-XI); top right 1st year male (14-XI); left female (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. Adult. Male: pattern of alula (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. 1st year. Male: pattern of alula (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. Female: pattern of alula (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. Adult. Male: pattern of median coverts (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. 1st year. Male: pattern of median coverts (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. Female: pattern of median coverts (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. Adult. Male: pattern of wing (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. 1st year. Male: pattern of wing (14-XI).



House Sparrow. Winter. Female: pattern of wing (14-XI).