EUROPEAN HONEY BUZZARD
(Pernis apivorus)

IDENTIFICATION
51-58 cm. Brown upperparts; pale underparts, with dark mottled; dark brown upperwing and pale underwing; dark bill; yellow eye.

SIMILAR SPECIES
Very similar to Common Buzzard, which has brown eyes. Booted Eagle lacks the black patch in the middle of undewing and has feathers on tarsus. Red Kite and Black Kite has forked tails.

SEXING
Male with grey head; upperparts tinged grey; black under outer primaries restricted to base with clear and contrasted limit with light part; secondaries with a broad non-banded space in the middle of the feather; tail feathers greyish above with broad light brown area before dark subterminal band; wing shorter than 395 mm. Female with brownish head, sometimes with grey around the eye; brown upperparts; black under outer primaries without clear contrasted limit with white base; secondaries with bars in the middle of the feather; tail feathers with bands regularly spaced with a broad band at half-feather; wing longer than 435 mm. Juveniles cannot be sexed using plumage pattern.
AGEING

3 age groups can be recognized:

**Juvenile** with fresh plumage without moult traces; iris dark; cere and bill base yellow with black only at bill tip; black under outer primaries including tip and digitale part; secondaries with dark regular and sparse barring; dark tail feathers usually with numerous bars regularly spaced (**CAUTION**: some birds with bars similar to adult or even with nearly invisible bars).

**2nd year spring** with some **juvenile** outer primaries and/or tail feathers retained. Usually they remain in wintering sites.

**Adult** with yellow iris; cere and bill dark; black under outer primaries only on tips (see **SEXING**); secondaries with a broad dark subterminal bar; pale tail feathers with clearly defined and sparse bars.

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Honey Buzzard. **Adult. Sexing. Pattern of head:** top male; bottom female.

Honey Buzzard. **Adult. Sexing. Pattern of tail feathers:** left male; right female.

Honey Buzzard. **Adult. Sexing. Pattern of secondaries:** left male; right female.

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Honey Buzzard. **Ageing/sexing. Dark under the outermost primary:** top adult male; middle adult female; bottom juvenile.
MOULT
Complete postbreeding moult started in breeding areas, suspended during migration and finished in wintering sites. Postjuvenile moult starts in spring of 2nd year usually remaining in wintering quarters.

PHENOLOGY

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STATUS IN ARAGON
Summer visitor breeding scarcely in mountainous areas (Pyrenees and Moncayo); very common on passage.
**European Honey Buzzard**

Honey Buzzard. Adult. Head pattern and iris colour: top male (14-III); bottom female (04-IX).

Honey Buzzard. Breast pattern: left 2nd year (14-III); right juvenile ().

Honey Buzzard. Adult. Upperpart pattern: left male (14-III); right female (04-IX).

Honey Buzzard. Breast pattern: left male (14-III); right female (04-IX).

Honey Buzzard. Upperpart pattern: left 2nd year (14-III); right juvenile ().

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Honey Buzzard. Adult. Tail pattern: left male (14-III); right female (04-IX).

Honey Buzzard. Tail pattern: left 2nd year (14-III); right juvenile ( ).


Honey Buzzard. Adult. Female: pattern of primary coverts (04-IX).

Honey Buzzard. 2nd year: pattern of primary coverts (14-III).

Honey Buzzard. Adult. Male: pattern of primaries (14-III)

Honey Buzzard. Juvenile: pattern of primary coverts (26-X) (Photo: Vincent van der Spek/Turnstones.org)
European Honey Buzzard

Honey Buzzard. Juvenile: pattern of primaries ()

Honey Buzzard. Adult. Male: pattern of secondaries (14-III)

Honey Buzzard. Adult. Female: pattern of primaries (04-IX)

Honey Buzzard. 2nd year: pattern of primaries (14-III)

Honey Buzzard. Adult. Male: pattern of secondaries (14-III)
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Honey Buzzard. Adult. Female: pattern of secondaries (04-IX)

Honey Buzzard. Juvenile: pattern of secondaries ()

Honey Buzzard. 2nd year: pattern of secondaries (14-III)

Honey Buzzard. Adult. Male: pattern of wing (14-III)
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Honey Buzzard. Adult. Female: pattern of wing (04-IX)

Honey Buzzard. 2nd year: pattern of wing (14-III)

Honey Buzzard. Juvenile: pattern of wing (26-X)  
(Photo: Vincent van der Spek/Turnstones.org)