134  Eurasian Hobby

SIMILAR SPECIES
Adult can be separated from the other small falcons for its moustache and reddish undertails; juvenile recalls a Peregrine Falcon (38-45 cm) which is bigger and with greyer upperparts.

EUROPEAN HOBBY  
(Falco subbuteo)

IDENTIFICATION
30-35 cm. Adult with slate grey upperparts; pale underparts; dark moustache; vent and thighs reddish; grey tail; pale underwing feathers. Juveniles dark brown and streaked; lacking red thighs.

SEXING
It's possible to sex the smallest males, with a wing shorter than 245 mm. (CAUTION: birds with longer wings belong to both sexes). In adults, male usually with deep blue grey upperparts; thighs and undertail coverts unstreaked or with poorly marked streaks; deep reddish underparts. Female usually with dull blue grey upperparts; thighs and undertail coverts streaked; underparts with duller reddish. In juveniles, male usually with marks on undertail coverts small and infrequent; the ochre on underparts without orange tinge; on 3rd-5th tail feathers the light band proximal to the subterminal band is usually interrupted at the shaft by a fine dark stripe. Female usually with marks on undertail coverts large and frequent; the ochre on underparts without orange tinge; on 3rd-5th tail feathers the light band proximal to the subterminal band is usually interrupted by a broad dark stripe. Pattern of the 3rd-5th tail feathers is useful to sex the 2nd year birds if juvenile rectrices have been retained (CAUTION: sexing of juveniles and 2nd year birds are not always possible due to overlap of characters, so only extreme birds must be sexed and only when have all the described patterns).


AGEING
4 types of age can be recognized:
Juvenile with feathers on upperparts black-brown with rufous edge; undertail coverts and thighs buffish yellow; central pair of tail feathers slate and with rufous tips; tail feathers barred and tipped rufous; greater covers and primary coverts tipped rufous.
2nd year with plumage similar to adult or with some mixed juvenile brown feathers; tail with both adult and juvenile feathers; greater coverts and flight feathers juvenile (in summer sometimes with some adult feathers just moulted).
3rd year only in birds which retain some juvenile tail feathers, secondaries and wing coverts.
Adult with blue-grey upperparts; undertail coverts and thighs reddish; central pair of tail feathers without rufous tips; tail feathers tipped greyish; greater coverts and primary coverts without rufous tips. CAUTION: some adult birds can retain secondaries with adult pattern but never have juvenile wing coverts.

Hobby. Ageing. Pattern of upperparts: left adult; right juvenile.

Hobby. Ageing. Pattern of thighs: left adult; right juvenile.

Hobby. Ageing. Pattern of undertail coverts: left adult; right juvenile.

Hobby. Ageing. Pattern of tips of tail feathers: left adult; right juvenile.

Hobby. Ageing. Pattern of tips of primary coverts: top adult; bottom juvenile.
MOULT
Complete postbreeding moult, starting usually by August and finished in winter quarters; some rare birds can retain secondaries unmoulted. Partial postjuvenile moult in winter, changing body feathers, some tail feathers and some wing coverts (never primary coverts).

PHENOLOGY

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STATUS IN ARAGON
Summer visitor, breeds in plain areas with open trees in low areas of the Region.

Hobby. Adult. Female (06-VIII).

Hobby. 2nd year. Male (30-IV).

Hobby. 2nd year. Female (19-IX).


Hobby. Adult. Head pattern: top male (18-VI); bottom female (06-VIII).
Hobby. 2nd year. Head pattern: top male (30-IV); bottom female (19-IX).

Hobby. 2nd year. Crown pattern: left male (30-IV); right female (19-IX).


Hobby. Adult. Breast pattern: left male (18-VI); right female (06-VIII).

Hobby. 2nd year. Breast pattern: left male (30-IV); right female (19-IX).


Hobby. Adult. Upperparts pattern: left male (18-VI); right female (06-VIII).

Hobby. Adult. Pattern of thighs: left male (18-VI); right female (06-VIII).

Hobby. 2nd year. Upperparts pattern: left male (30-IV); right female in autumn (19-IX).
Hobby. Juvenile. Pattern of thighs: left male (10-IX); right female (15-X).

Hobby. Adult. Rump pattern: left male (18-VI); right female (06-VIII).

Hobby. 2nd year. Rump pattern: left male (30-IV); right female (19-IX).

Hobby. Adult. Pattern of undertail coverts: left male (18-VI); right female (06-VIII).

Hobby. 2nd year. Pattern of undertail coverts: left male (30-IV); right female (19-IX).
Hobby. Juvenile. Pattern of undertail coverts: left male (10-IX); right female (15-X).


Hobby. Adult. Female: pattern of primary coverts (06-VIII).

Hobby. Adult. Pattern of 3rd to 5th tail feathers: left male (18-VI); right female (06-VIII).

Hobby. Juvenile. Pattern of 3rd to 5th tail feathers: left male (10-IX); right female (15-X).


Hobby. Adult. Female: pattern of primary coverts (06-VIII).

Hobby. 2nd year. Pattern of 3rd to 5th tail feathers: left male (30-IV); right female (19-IX).
Hobby. 2nd year. Male: pattern of primary coverts (30-IV).

Hobby. 2nd year. Female: pattern of primary coverts (19-IX).


Hobby. Adult. Pattern of scapulars and tertials: left male (18-VI); right female (06-VIII).
Hobby. Juvenile. Pattern of scapulars and tertials: left male (10-IX); right female (29-XI).

Hobby. 2nd year. Pattern of scapulars and tertials: left male (30-IV); right female (19-IX).


Hobby. 2nd year. Male: pattern of primaries (05-V).

Hobby. 2nd year. Female: pattern of primaries (19-IX).
Hobby. 2nd year autumn. Female: pattern of primaries (19-IX).


Hobby. 2nd year. Female: pattern of secondaries (19-IX).

Hobby. 2nd year. Male: pattern of secondaries (05-V).

Hobby. 2nd year. Female: pattern of secondaries (19-IX).

Hobby. 2nd year. Male: pattern of wing (30-IV).


Hobby. 2nd year. Female: pattern of wing (19-IX).

Hobby. Adult. Female: pattern of wing (06-VIII).