WATER RAIL  (*Rallus aquaticus*)

**IDENTIFICATION**
25-28 cm. **Adult** brown reddish upperparts, with dark streaks; grey slate chin and breast; grey belly streaked white; dark flank streaked pale; white undertail coverts with reddish edges; long and reddish bill darker on base. **Juvenile** paler; pale supercilium; whitish underparts spotted brownish; pale brown bill

**AGEING**
3 age groups can be recognized:
- **Juvenile** with white-buff breast, chin and supercilium; iris and bill pale brown.
- **1st year autumn/2nd year spring** similar to **adult** but with a pale brown streak running from base of upper mandible to upper part of eye; chin and throat white or light grey; iris orange-brown; sometimes with juvenile brown feathers retained on breast; **juvenile** flight feathers retained that will be heavily worn in **spring**. **CAUTION**: some individuals may be indistinguishable from **adults**.
- **Adult** with breast and underparts slate grey; chin slate grey or whitish shading into plain slate grey; reddish iris; bill dark with edges and base bright red.

**SIMILAR SPECIES**
Long and red bill makes this species unmistakable.

**SEXING**
Plumage of both sexes alike. Size can be an useful characteristic with most of the specimens: **male** with wing longer than 120 mm; tarsus longer than 40 mm. **Female** with wing shorter than 115 mm; tarsus shorter than 37 mm.

http://blascozumeta.com
MOULT
Complete postbreeding moult, usually finished in September. Partial postjuvenile moult involving body feathers and, sometimes, tail feathers; often finished in October. Both age classes have a prebreeding moult confined to body feathers.

PHENOLOGY

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STATUS EN ARAGON
Resident, distributed in Gallocanta, Canal de Berdun and rivers Ebro, Jalon and Piedra.

Water Rail. Spring. Head pattern and iris colour. From top to bottom: adult (06-VI); 2nd year (14-V); juvenile (14-VII); young (14-VII).
Water Rail. Spring.
Breast pattern: top adult (06-VI); middle 2nd year (14-V); bottom juvenile (14-VII).

Water Rail. Spring. Chin pattern: left juvenile (14-VII); right young (14-VII).

Water Rail. Spring. Pattern of legs. From top to bottom: adult (06-VI); 2nd year (14-V); juvenile (14-VII); young (14-VII).

Water Rail. Spring. Chin pattern: left adult (06-VI); right 2nd year (14-V).
Water Rail. Spring. Flank pattern: top adult (06-VI); middle 2nd year (14-V); bottom juvenile (14-VII).

Water Rail. Spring. Upperpart pattern: top left adult (06-VI); top right 2nd year (14-V); left juvenile (14-VII).

Water Rail. Spring. Tail pattern: top left adult (06-VI); top right 2nd year (14-V); left juvenile (14-VII).

Water Rail. Spring. Pattern of undertail coverts: top left adult (06-VI); top right 2nd year (14-V); left juvenile (14-VII).


Water Rail. Spring. 2nd year: pattern of primaries (14-V).

Water Rail. Spring. 2nd year: pattern of secondaries (14-V).
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Water Rail. Autumn. Adult (02-IX).

Water Rail. Spring. 2nd year: pattern of wing (14-V).

Water Rail. Autumn.
Head pattern: top adult (02-IX); bottom 1st year (27-VIII).

Water Rail. Autumn.
Breast pattern: top adult (02-IX); bottom 1st year (27-VIII).

Water Rail. Autumn. Chin pattern: left adult (02-IX); right 1st year (27-VIII).

Water Rail. Autumn. Upperpart pattern: left adult (02-IX); right 1st year (27-VIII).

Water Rail. Autumn. Tail pattern: left adult (02-IX); right 1st year (27-VIII).
Water Rail.
Autumn.
Flank pattern: top adult (02-IX); bottom 1st year (27-VIII).

Water Rail. Autumn. 1st year: pattern of secondaries (27-VIII)

Water Rail. Autumn. Adult: pattern of secondaries (02-IX)

Water Rail. Autumn. 1st year: pattern of primaries (27-VIII)

Water Rail. Autumn. Adult: pattern of primaries (02-IX)
Water Rail. Autumn. Adult: pattern of wing (02-IX)

Water Rail. Autumn. 1st year: pattern of wing (27-VIII)