275 European Nightjar

European Nightjar (Caprimulgus europaeus)

IDENTIFICATION
23-27 cm.; wing 52-59 cm. Grey brown plumage; grey brown wings and tail, with white patches in male; brown neck, with some white patches on sides; yellow buff underparts, strongly streaked transversally.

SEXING
In adults, male with two outermost tail feathers with a white patch on tips sized 20-30 mm; the three outermost primaries with a broad white patch on inner web. Female lacks white patches on wings (some birds have yellowish patches) and have a narrow and marmorated patch sized 3-4 mm on the outermost tail feathers. In juveniles, only some males can be safely sexed: the two outermost primaries with large buff patches, usually the outermost larger than the others; the two outermost tail feathers with broad buff patch on inner web. (CAUTION: birds with two outermost primaries with narrow pale patches and two outer tail feathers with a narrow pale patch can be of both sexes.

SIMILAR SPECIES
Very similar to Red-necked Nightjar, which is bigger (30-40 cm, wing length 60-65 cm) and has a rusty red neck band.

http://blascozumeta.com
AGEING

3 age groups can be recognized:

**Juvenile** without white patches on primaries and tail feathers so resembles an **adult female**, but recognizable by very fresh plumage with all wing feathers of single age; alula, primary coverts and secondaries with a thin buff edge at tips; tail feathers with arrow-shaped dark marks; outer tail feather narrow, with rounded tip and dark marks near the tip.

**2nd year** only in birds with retained **juvenile** primaries or secondaries, usually shorter than **adult** feathers; sometimes coverts under alula and some **juvenile** alula feather unmoulted.

**Adult** with alula, primary coverts and secondaries with dark tips; coverts under alula and alula feathers moulted and without moult limits; worn flight feathers; if there are two generations of flight feathers both are with **adult** pattern and similar length. **Adult male** with white patches on wing and tail; **adult female** with outer tail feather broad, with square tip and without dark marks near the tip.
MOULT
Complete postbreeding and postjuvenile mouls starting in July in breeding areas, suspended before migration and finished in wintering sites; the amount of feathers moulted in Europe is very variable since birds changing all body feathers and tertials to those with no moult. Both age classes can leave unmoulted secondaries; some juvenile birds can have unmoulted primaries too.

PHENOLOGY

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STATUS IN ARAGON
Summer visitor, widely distributed on passage. Breeds in forests in Northern area of the Region.
Nightjar. Adult. Head pattern: top male (04-IX); bottom female (28-V).

Nightjar. Adult. Breast pattern: left male (04-IX); right female (28-V).

Nightjar. 2nd year. Head pattern: top male (02-VI); bottom female (21-V).

Nightjar. 2nd year. Breast pattern: left male (02-VI); right female (21-V).

Nightjar. Juvenile. Head pattern: top male (12-VIII); bottom male/female (12-VIII).

Nightjar. Adult. Upperpart: left male (04-IX); right female (28-V).

Nightjar. Juvenile. Upperpart pattern: left male (12-VIII); right male/female (12-VIII).


Nightjar. 2nd year. Upperpart pattern: left male (02-VI); right female (21-V).
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Nightjar. 2nd year. Male: pattern of tail and the outermost tail feather (02-VI).


Nightjar. 2nd year. Female: pattern of tail and the outermost tail feather (21-V).

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Nightjar. 2nd year. Female: pattern of alula (02-VI).

Nightjar. Adult. Male: pattern of coverts under the alula (11-VI).

Nightjar. 2nd year. Female: pattern of alula (21-V).

Nightjar. 2nd year. Male: pattern of coverts under the alula (11-VI).


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Nightjar. 2nd year. Male: pattern of the outermost primaries (02-VI).


Nightjar. 2nd year. Female: pattern of the outermost primaries (21-V).


Nightjar. 2nd year. Male: pattern of primaries (02-VI).
Nightjar. 2nd year. Female: pattern of primaries (21-V).


Nightjar. Adult. Female: pattern of secondaries with one age of feathers (12-VIII).
Nightjar. Adult. Female: pattern of secondaries with two ages of feathers (04-IX).

Nightjar. 2nd year. Male: pattern of secondaries and wing coverts (02-VI).

Nightjar. 2nd year. Female: pattern of secondaries and wing coverts (21-V).


Nightjar. 2nd year. Male: pattern of wing (02-VI).


Nightjar. 2nd year. Female: pattern of wing (21-V).

Nightjar. Adult. Female: pattern of wing with retained feathers (04-IX).

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