White Wagtail

**SEXING/AGEING**

In Spring, with breeding plumage, adult male with pure black and white colours on head; black on crown reaching nape; black throat almost always without white feathers admixed; wing coverts with a large white patch; with two ages of feathers on wing. Adult female with black on crown but with smaller extension than male; sometimes with pale feathers admixed in black throat; wing coverts with a small white patch; with two ages of feathers on wing. 2nd year male very similar to adult female but with three ages of feathers on wing if some juvenile feathers have been retained; moulted wing coverts with a large white patch. 2nd year female usually with crown and nape grey, with little or no black; chin and throat black with white traces; with three ages of feathers on wing if some juvenile feathers have been retained; moulted wing coverts with a small white patch. Juvenile with very fresh plumage; head largely dull greyish; grey-brown breast band; chin whitish tinged buff. Juveniles cannot be sexed using plumage pattern.

In autumn, adult male with a lot of pure white on forehead; crown and nape with an extensive black colour mixed with grey; wing coverts with a large white patch; with only one age of very fresh feathers on wing; flight feathers deep grey. Adult female usually with grey forehead; crown and nape usually grey without black or with hidden black traces; white face more tinged cream-yellow than male; wing coverts with a small white patch; with only one age of fresh feathers on wing; flight feathers deep grey. 1st year male with crown and nape grey tinged black, sometimes with white on forehead; with two ages of feathers on wing; moult limit between moulted fresh greater coverts, with dark centre, and pale worn juvenile retained; if all greater coverts are unmoulted or all have been moulted, check then juvenile brownish flight feathers; moulted wing coverts with a large white patch. 1st year female with crown and nape olive grey; forehead greyish or whitish tinged olive; with two ages of feathers on wing; moult strategy similar to 1st year male; moulted wing coverts with a small white patch; with juvenile brownish flight feathers.

**WHITE WAGTAIL (**Motacilla alba**)

**IDENTIFICATION**

16-19 cm. Plumage grey, white and black; long tail black and white. In breeding plumage, black crown and white forehead; black bib and breast. In winter, grey crown and white throat with a dark band only on breast.

**SIMILAR SPECIES**

This species is unmistakable


White Wagtail. Autumn. Sexing. Pattern of crown: top left adult male; top right 1st year male; left female.

MOULT
Complete postbreeding moult, usually finished in September. Partial postjuvenile moult including body feathers and lesser and median coverts; there are birds moulting none, some or all greater coverts; some birds extend their moult to tertials, tail feathers and some flight feathers; usually finished early October. Between February and April, both types of age have a prebreeding moult acquiring the breeding plumage, changing a variable number of median and inner greater coverts, tertials and tail feathers.

PHENOLOGY

STATUS IN ARAGON
Resident. Widely distributed throughout the Region with contribution of wintering European birds.


White Wagtail. Spring. 2nd year. Male (23-IV).

White Wagtail. Spring. 2nd year. Female (23-V).

White Wagtail. Spring. Adult. Head pattern: top male (30-IV); bottom female (06-V).

White Wagtail. Spring. Head pattern: top 2nd year male (23-IV); middle 2nd year female (23-V); bottom juvenile (08-VIII)

White Wagtail. Spring. 2nd year. Female (23-V).
White Wagtail. Spring. Adult. Pattern of crown and forehead: left male (30-IV); right female (06-V).

White Wagtail. Spring. Adult. Nape pattern: left male (30-IV); right female (06-V).

White Wagtail. Spring. Adult. Breast pattern: left male (30-IV); right female (06-V).
White Wagtail. Spring. Adult. Upperparts pattern: left male (30-IV); right female (06-V).

White Wagtail. Spring. Male: pattern of wing with two ages of feathers (1 postbreeding, 2 prebreeding) (30-IV).
White Wagtail. Spring. Adult. Female: pattern of wing with two ages of feathers (1 postbreeding, 2 prebreeding) (06-V).

White Wagtail. Spring. 2nd year. Male: pattern of wing with three ages of feathers (1 juvenile, 2 postjuvenile, 3 prebreeding) (23-IV).

White Wagtail. Spring. 2nd year. Female: pattern of wing with two ages of feathers (1 juvenile, 3 prebreeding) (23-V).


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White Wagtail. Winter. 1st year. Pattern of forehead and crown: left male (21-X); right female (21-X).

White Wagtail. Winter. Adult. Upperparts pattern: left male (30-X); right female (21-X).

White Wagtail. Winter. 1st year. Nape pattern: left male (30-X); right female (21-X).


White Wagtail. Winter. 1st year. Pattern of breast and throat: left male (30-X); right female (21-X).

