330    Bluethroat

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Bluethroat. Spring. Adult. Male (16-III)

BLUETHROAT (*Luscinia svecica*)

IDENTIFICATION
13-14 cm. Brown upperparts and central tail 13-14 cm. Dark brown upperparts and central tail feathers; reddish tail with a terminal dark band on the tip; pale supercilium; pale belly; blue throat in breeding male and lacking blue (or with little) on non breeding males and females.

SEXING
In breeding plumage, adult male with deep blue chin and throat with a reddish or white patch; reddish breast. Female with whitish chin and throat, lacking blue colour or with a little on upperbreast; with two blackish bands on each side of breast that fuse in the center and may have some reddish tinge on upperbreast. In autumn, adult male with whitish throat and blue tinge on both sides of throat and breast; 1st year male with some blue on both sides of throat and breast. Female without blue and sometimes with ill-defined reddish tinge.

AGEING
It's difficult to find juveniles in Aragon, so only 2 age groups can be recognized: 1st year autumn/2nd year spring usually with moult limit between moulted greater coverts, more greyish and without clear pale tips, and juvenile retained, with a buff spot at tips; if unmoulted juvenile tertials tipped pale; flight feathers worn in spring. Adult without moult limits on wing and lacking pale spots on tips of wing coverts and tertials; flight feathers slightly worn in spring.

SIMILAR SPECIES
This species is unmistakable.
MOULT
Complete postbreeding moult, usually finished late August; some birds start their moult in wintering quarters. Partial postjuvenile moult involving body feathers, lesser, median and some inner greater coverts; some birds can moult most of greater coverts and some tertials and tail feathers; usually finished between August and September. Both age classes have a prebreeding moult, between February-April, including head and breast feathers to acquire the breeding plumage, but usually only in males.

PHENOLOGY

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STATUS IN ARAGON
On passage, sometimes wintering in the Ebro Valley. Some records breeding in Montes Universales.


Bluethroat. Spring. 2nd year. Head pattern: top male (20-III); bottom female (27-III).

Bluethroat. Spring. 2nd year. Upperpart pattern: left male (20-III); right female (27-III).


Bluethroat. Spring. Adult. Tail pattern: left male (16-III); right female (27-III).

Bluethroat. Spring. 2nd year. Breast pattern: left male (20-III); right female (27-III).
Bluethroat. Spring. 2nd year. Tail pattern: left male (20-III); right female (27-III).


Bluethroat. Autumn. Adult. Male (17-IX)

Bluethroat. Spring. Adult. Female: pattern of wing (27-III.)

Bluethroat. Autumn. Adult. Female (17-IX)

Bluethroat. Spring. 2nd year. Male: pattern of wing (20-III.)
Bluethroat.

Autumn. 1st year. Male (17-IX)

Bluethroat.

Autumn. 1st year. Female (17-IX)

Bluethroat.

Autumn. Adult. Head pattern: top male (17-IX); bottom female (17-IX).

Bluethroat.

Autumn. Adult. Breast pattern: left male (17-IX); right female (17-IX).

Bluethroat.

Autumn. 1st year. Breast pattern: left male (17-IX); right female (17-IX).
Bluethroat. Autumn. 1st year. Upperpart pattern: left male (17-IX); right female (17-IX).

Bluethroat. Autumn. Adult. Upperpart pattern: left male (17-IX); right female (17-IX).


Bluethroat. Autumn. Adult. Female: pattern of wing (17-IX)

Bluethroat. Autumn. Adult. Tail pattern: left male (17-IX); right female (17-IX).

Bluethroat. Autumn. 1st year. Male: pattern of wing (17-IX)

Bluethroat. Autumn. 1st year. Tail pattern: left male (17-IX); right female (17-IX).
Bluethroat. Autumn. 1st year. Female: pattern of wing (17-IX)