RED-BACKED SHRIKE (Lanius collurio)

IDENTIFICATION
17-18 cm. Adults with reddish/brown upperparts; male with grey crown and black eye-stripe; pale underparts; female with ochre head, without black eye-stripe. Juvenile with reddish plumage and barred.

SIMILAR SPECIES
Recalls a Woodchat Shrike, with grey upperparts and chestnut head. Juveniles of both species are quite similar, but Woodchat Shrike has greyer on upperparts, with white on scapulars and with the outermost tail feathers with broad pale patch on the tail.

SEXING
Male with white-pinkish underparts, without bars; grey-ash head with black eye-stripe; black and white tail. Female with white-buff and barred underparts; brownish head with grey-reddish ear-coverts; dark brown tail feathers with the outermost feather paler and with white edge. Juveniles cannot be sexed using plumage pattern. CAUTION: some females are quite similar to males but always have vermiculated underparts.
AGEING

2 age groups can be recognized safely:

**Juvenile** with fresh plumage; upperparts with feathers having a dark subterminal bar; wing coverts with a dark line on tip.

**Adult** with worn plumage in **summer**; plumage pattern described in **SEXING**.

**NOTE:** in **females**, two different patterns have been described:

**Adult-like female** recognized by tertials with pale brown tips without dark subterminal bars (often with just a dark mark); without bars on upperparts except very slight barred on uppertail coverts.

**Juvenile-like female** with tertials with pale tips and blackish subterminal bars; with bars on upperparts from crown to uppertail coverts.

If all **females** with **juvenile-like** pattern are invariably **2nd year** birds is unknown, so after **prebreeding** moult ageing is not possible using plumage pattern.
MOULT
Partial postbreeding and postjuvenile moult involving, before migration, body feathers and, in some birds, tertials, central pair of tail feathers or wing coverts (CAUTION: some adults no moult before migration). Both age classes have a complete prebreeding moult in winter quarters.

PHENOLOGY

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STATUS IN ARAGON
Summer visitor, breeding in open pastures with small trees; widely distributed in Pyrenees and very located in Sistema Iberico.
Red-backed Shrike. Breast pattern: left male (11-VII); right adult-like female (11-VII).

Red-backed Shrike. Crown pattern: left male (11-VII); right adult-like female (11-VII).

Red-backed Shrike. Pattern of flank: top male (11-VII); middle female (11-VII); bottom juvenile (12-IX).

Red-backed Shrike. Breast pattern: left juvenile-like female (11-V); right juvenile (12-IX).

Red-backed Shrike. Crown pattern: left juvenile-like female (11-V); right juvenile (12-IX).

Red-backed Shrike. Upperpart pattern: left male (11-VII); right adult-like female (11-VII).
Red-backed Shrike. Upper part pattern: left juvenile-like female (11-V); right juvenile (12-IX).

Red-backed Shrike. Tail pattern: left male (11-VII); right adult-like female (11-VII).

Red-backed Shrike. Tail pattern: left juvenile-like female (11-V); right juvenile (12-IX).

Red-backed Shrike. Pattern of tertials: left juvenile-like female (11-V); right juvenile (12-IX).

Red-backed Shrike. Pattern of tertials: left male (11-VII); right adult-like female (11-VII).

