Common Reed Bunting

451

Reed Bunting. Late winter. Male (12-II).

COMMON REED BUNTING (*Emberiza schoeniclus*)

IDENTIFICATION
13-16 cm. Late winter, male with head and throat black and wide white band around neck. Male in autumn/early winter and female with head chestnut-reddish, supercilium and moustache buff, throat whitish. Bill grey and outer tail feathers white.

SEXING
Male in breeding plumage with black head and throat. After postbreeding/postjuvenile moults, some males with similar plumage pattern like females, but recognizable by having a white band on nape, grey rump and black on base of neck and crown feathers with rounded pattern; wear of feathers on the head will make the breeding pattern of male appear throughout the winter. Female without (or quite hidden) white band on nape, brownish rump, lack black on base of neck feathers and black-grey on base of crown feathers with pointed pattern. CAUTION: it is necessary to lift feathers from the crown and throat to appreciate their pattern. Some females have much white on neck and have greyish rump.

SIMILAR SPECIES
Male in breeding plumage unmistakable. Male in winter and female recall that of a female House Sparrow which lacks white on
AGEING

This species doesn’t breed in Aragon, so only 2 types of age can be recognized: 1st year autumn/2nd year winter with moult limits between tertials or between tertials and secondaries; tail feathers with pointed tips due to wear; usually pale flight feathers. Adult with fresh wing feathers, without moult limits; tail feathers fresh and with rounded tips; usually dark flight feathers. CAUTION: some birds moult all tail feathers in their postjuvenile moult, so fresh and rounded feathers no necessary suggest an adult bird.

Reed Bunting. Winter. Sexing. Pattern of base of crown feathers: left male; right female.

Reed Bunting. Winter. Sexing. Pattern of base of throat feathers: left male; right female.


MOULT
Complete postbreeding moult, usually finished in October. Partial postjuvenile moult including body feathers, lesser, median and all greater coverts; some birds moult tertials, all tail feathers and some flight feathers; usually finished in October.

PHENOLOGY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>VI</th>
<th>VII</th>
<th>VIII</th>
<th>IX</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>XI</th>
<th>XII</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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STATUS IN ARAGON
Winter visitor. Widely distributed throughout marshlands and riversides from the Region.
Reed Bunting. Pattern of base of neck feathers: left male (20-X); right female (20-X).

Reed Bunting. Nape pattern. From top to bottom: male in late winter (12-II); male poorly weared in autumn (21-X); male weared in autumn (19-X); female (19-X).

Reed Bunting. Head pattern. From top to bottom: male in late winter (12-II); male poorly weared in autumn (21-X); male weared in autumn (19-X); female (19-X).
Reed Bunting. Breast pattern. From top to bottom: male in late winter (12-II); male poorly weared in autumn (21-X); male weared in autumn (19-X); female (19-X).

Reed Bunting. Male. Pattern of rump and upperpart: top left late winter (12-II); top right poorly weared in autumn (21-X); left weared in autumn (19-X).

Reed Bunting. Female. Pattern of rump and upperpart (19-X).
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Reed Bunting. Tail wear: left adult (20-X); right 1st year (20-X).

Reed Bunting. 1st year. Male: pattern of wing (29-X).


Reed Bunting. 1st year. Female: pattern of wing (19-X).

Reed Bunting. Adult. Female: pattern of wing (21-X).