

## 06 Great Crested Grebe



### GREAT CRESTED GREBE (*Podiceps cristatus*)

#### IDENTIFICATION

46-51 cm. In **breeding** plumage with dark upperparts; white underparts; head with dark and reddish ornaments. In **non breeding** plumage with duller colours; without ornaments on head.

#### SIMILAR SPECIES

This species is unmistakable.

#### SEXING

Both sexes with similar plumage. Size can be useful for sexing in extreme birds: **male** with wing longer than 200 mm; bill longer than 60 mm. **Female** with wing shorter than 175 mm; bill shorter than 60 mm.

#### MOULT

Complete **postbreeding** moult, usually finished in November. Partial **postjuvenile** moult, confined to upperparts and some wing coverts; finished between August and November. Both types of age have a **prebreeding** moult to acquire the breeding plumage.

#### AGEING

4 types of age can be recognized:

**Juvenile** with remnants of nestling pattern (brown streaked and down) on sides of head and neck; grey secondaries; outermost greater coverts with dark grey inner web; iris orange with narrow yellow ring.

**1st year winter** similar to **adults** in **winter**, but scapulars with remnants of down on tips; secondaries and outer greater coverts with **juvenile** pattern; hind rim of tarsus only slightly serrated.

**2nd year spring** with flight feathers and outer greater coverts with **juvenile** pattern; ornaments on head poorly developed; ; hind rim of tarsus slightly serrated.

**Adult** in any season with white secondaries; outermost greater coverts with pure white inner web; scapulars without remnants of down on tips; red iris with narrow orange ring; hind rim of tarsus strongly serrated. In **breeding** plumage with well developed ornaments on head.

#### PHENOLOGY

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII

#### STATUS IN ARAGON

Resident, with contribution of wintering European birds. Breeds widely distributed throughout the Region being more abundant in ponds in north of the Ebro river.