

372 Whitethroat



Whitethroat. Spring. Adult. Male (26-IV)

WHITETHROAT (*Sylvia communis*)

IDENTIFICATION

13-15 cm. Brownish upperparts; pale underparts, whiter on throat; wing coverts, tertials and secondaries with buff edges; legs and bill pale grey. **Breeding male** with grey head; **non breeding male, female and juvenile** with brownish head. Wing 66-77 mm.



Whitethroat. Pattern of head, tail and upperparts.

SIMILAR SPECIES

Recalls a **Spectacled Warbler** with similar wing pattern but smaller (12-13 cm; wing 53-57 mm).



Spectacled Warbler. Female.

SEXING

In **spring**, **male** with grey head; lesser wing coverts with grey centres; breast with pinkish tinge; iris bright orange. **Female** without grey on head; lesser coverts brown or grey-brown; breast without pink tinge; iris yellow-brown to olive-brown (**CAUTION**: some **adult females** have grey on head and there are **2nd year males** without grey on head and many birds are intermediate, so this species can be confidently sexed only in extreme birds due to overlap). In **autumn** sexes very similar, so sexing is very difficult and possible only in very extreme birds: **male** with grey on base of crown feathers and centre of lesser coverts; breast with pinkish tinge; iris brown-orange. **Female** without grey on base of crown feathers and centre of lesser coverts; breast without pinkish tinge; iris yellow-lemon. **Juveniles** and **1st year** cannot be sexed using plumage characters.

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Whitethroat. Sexing. Pattern of head and iris colour: top male; bottom female



AGEING

4 types of age can be recognized:

Juvenile with fresh plumage; iris greyish (an useful character during all the autumn).

1st year autumn with moult limit on wing between moulted greater coverts, with dark buff edges, and juvenile retained, with paler buff edges (**CAUTION:** without moult limit if all greater coverts have been moulted or all are unmoulted); if the outermost tail feathers are unmoulted, then with brownish tinge and bad defined white edges.

2nd year spring only in birds with juvenile tail feathers, which are very worn; if flight feathers are unmoulted, then more eroded than **adults** and primary coverts worn and pointed (**CAUTION:** these charactes are not always easy to see).

Adult in autumn without moult limits and fresh (**CAUTION:** some birds have suspended moult); iris reddish orange; outermost tail feathers pure white. In **spring** with wing feathers moderately fresh.



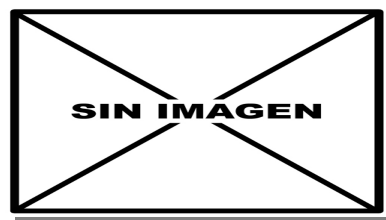
Whitethroat. Sexing. Pattern of breast: left male; right female.



Whitethroat. Autumn. Ageing. Colour of iris: top adult; middle 1st year; bottom juvenile.



Whitethroat. Sexing. Pattern of lesser coverts: top male; bottom female.



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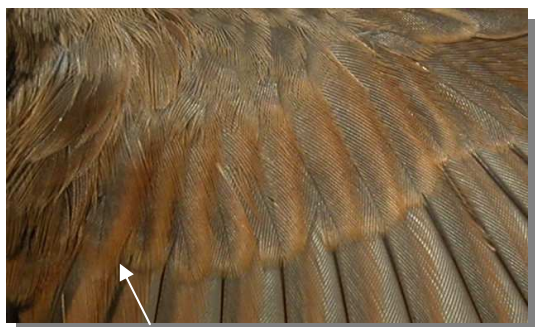
Whitethroat. Autumn. Ageing. Pattern of the outermost tail feather: left adult female; right 1st year.

MOULT

Complete **postbreeding** moult, usually finished late September. **CAUTION:** some birds suspend their moult before migration to be finished in wintering quarters, so can have old and fresh flight feathers on passage. Partial **postjuvenile** moult, including body feathers, lesser and median coverts, some or all the greater coverts and sometimes tertials and tail feathers; usually finished in September. Both types of age have a **prebreeding** moult which can be complete in some **2nd year** birds and moult all wing coverts and most of the flight feathers in **adults**.

STATUS IN ARAGON

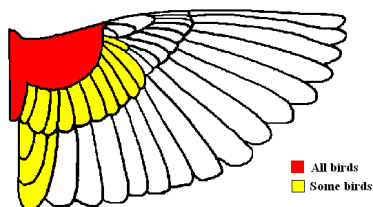
Summer visitor, widely distributed throughout the mountainous areas of the Region. Widespread on passage.



Whitethroat. Autumn. Ageing. Moult limit on greater coverts: top adult; bottom 1st year.



Whitethroat. Spring. Adult. Female (23-IV).



Whitethroat. Extent of postjuvenile moult.

PHENOLOGY

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



Whitethroat. Spring. 2nd year. Male (04-IV).

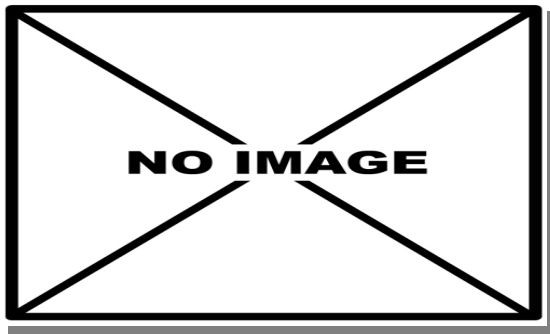
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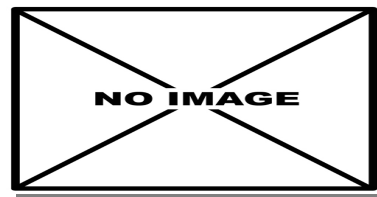
Whitethroat. Spring. 2nd year. Female (28-IV).



Whitethroat. Spring. Head pattern and iris colour: top 2nd year male (04-IV); middle 2nd year female (28-IV); bottom juvenile ().



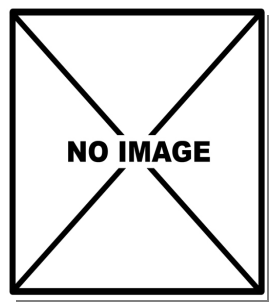
Whitethroat. Spring. Juvenile ().



Whitethroat. Spring. Adult. Crown pattern: left male (26-IV); right female (23-IV).



Whitethroat . Spring. Adult. Head pattern and iris colour: top male (26-IV); bottom female (23-IV).



Whitethroat. Spring. Crown pattern: top left 2nd year male (04-IV); top right 2nd year female (28-IV); left juvenile ().

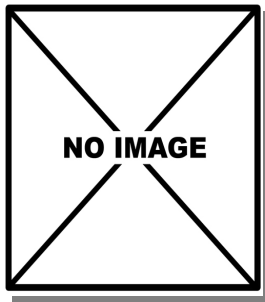
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Whitethroat. Spring. Adult. Colour of base of crown feathers: left male (26-IV); right female (23-IV).



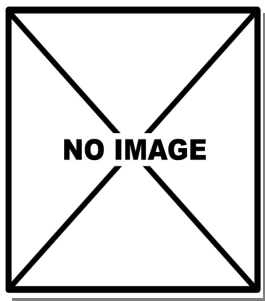
Whitethroat. Spring. Adult. Breast pattern: left male (26-IV); right female (23-IV).



Whitethroat. Spring. Colour of base of crown feathers: top left 2nd year male (04-IV); top right 2nd year female (28-IV); left juvenile ().



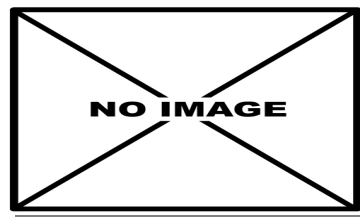
Whitethroat . Spring. A d u l t . Pattern of lesser coverts: top male (26-IV); bottom female (23-IV).



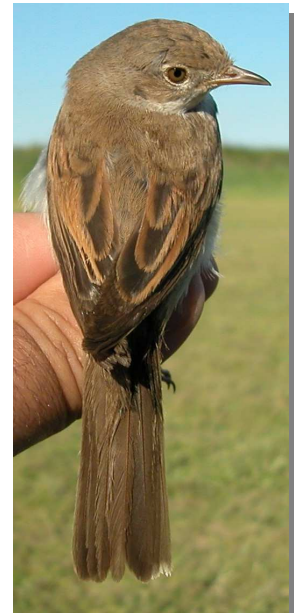
Whitethroat. Spring. Breast pattern: top left 2nd year male (04-IV); top right 2nd year female (28-IV); left juvenile ().



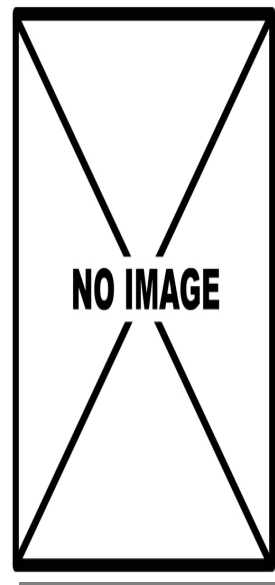
Whitethroat. Spring. Pattern of lesser coverts: top 2nd year male (04-IV); middle 2nd year female (28-IV); bottom juvenile ().



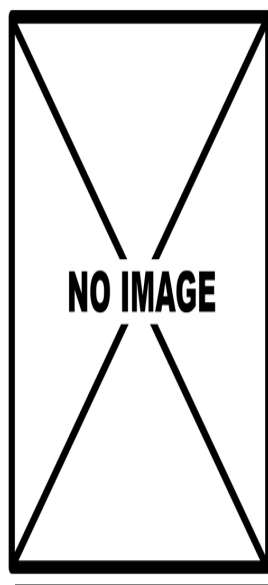
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Whitethroat. Spring. Adult. Tail pattern: left male (26-IV); right female (23-IV).



Whitethroat. Spring. Upperpart pattern: top left 2nd year male (04-IV); top right 2nd year female (28-IV); left juvenile ().

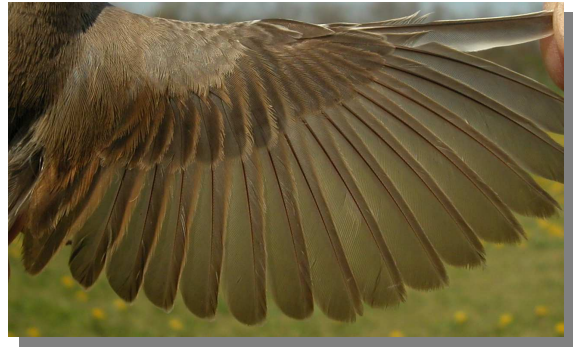


Whitethroat. Spring. Tail pattern: top left 2nd year male (04-IV); top right 2nd year female (28-IV); left juvenile ().

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Whitethroat. Spring. Adult. Upperparts pattern: left male (26-IV); right female (23-IV).



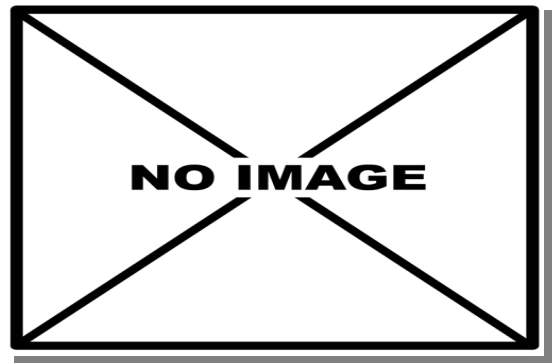
Whitethroat. Spring. 2nd year. Male: pattern of wing (04-IV).



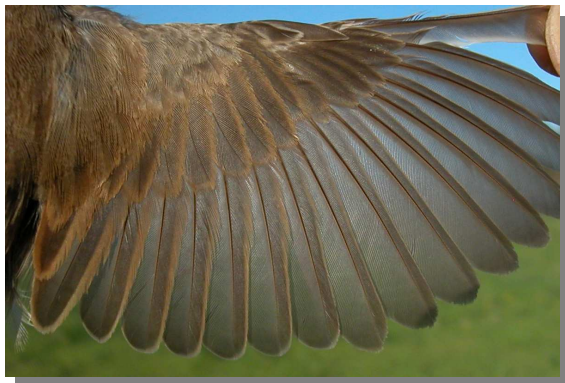
Whitethroat. Spring. 2nd year. Female: pattern of wing (28-IV).



Whitethroat. Spring. Adult. Male: pattern of wing



Whitethroat. Spring. Juvenile: pattern of wing ()



Whitethroat. Spring. Adult. Female: pattern of wing (23-IV).

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Whitethroat. Autumn. Adult. Male (31-VIII).



Whitethroat. Autumn. Head pattern and iris colour: top adult male (16-IX); middle adult female (31-VIII); bottom 1st year (05-VIII).



Whitethroat. Autumn. Adult. Female (31-VIII).

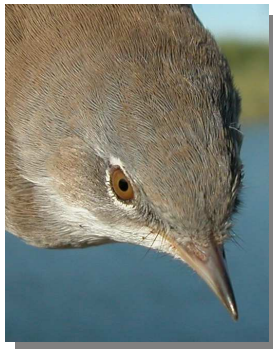


Whitethroat. Autumn. 1st year (05-VIII).



Whitethroat. Autumn. Breast pattern: top left adult male (16-IX); top right adult female (31-VIII); left 1st year (05-VIII).

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Whitethroat. Autumn. Pattern of lesser coverts: top adult male (16-IX); middle adult female (31-VIII); bottom 1st year (05-VIII).



Whitethroat. Autumn. Crown pattern: top left adult male (16-IX); top right adult female (31-VIII); left 1st year (05-VIII).

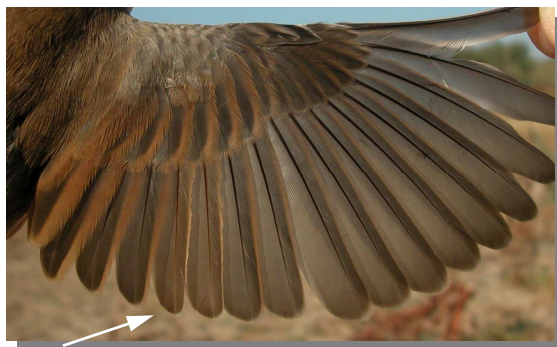


Whitethroat. Autumn. Colour of base of crown feathers: top adult male (16-IX); middle adult female (31-VIII); bottom 1st year (05-VIII).



Whitethroat. Autumn. Tail pattern: top left adult male (16-IX); top right adult female (31-VIII); left 1st year (05-VIII).

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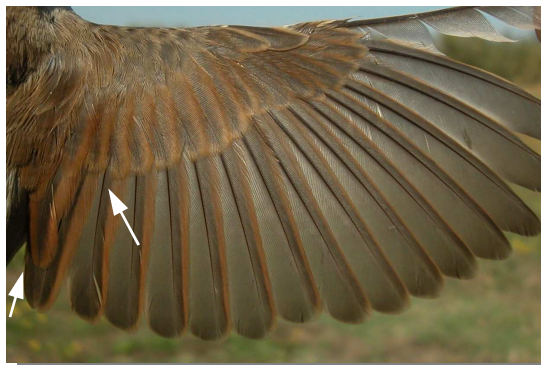
Whitethroat. Autumn. Adult with suspended moult. Male: pattern of wing (31-VIII).



Whitethroat. Autumn. Adult with suspended moult. Female: pattern of wing (31-VIII).



Whitethroat. Autumn. Upper parts pattern: top left adult male (16-IX); top right adult female (31-VIII); left 1st year (05-VIII).



Whitethroat. Autumn. 1st year: pattern of wing (05-VIII).



Whitethroat. Autumn. Adult with completed moult. Male: pattern of wing (31-VIII).