

447 Ortolan Bunting



Ortolan Bunting. Autumn. 1st year (27-IX).

ORTOLAN BUNTING (*Emberiza hortulana*)

IDENTIFICATION

15-17 cm. Upperparts brown streaked dark; buff underparts, with yellow throat and moustachial stripe; greenish head; brown bill with pinkish tinge. **Juveniles** brown, with paler underparts.

SIMILAR SPECIES

Adult birds are unmistakable due to their head pattern with a moustachial stripe. **Juveniles** recalls to the **Cirl Bunting** ones, which have greenish lesser coverts; juvenile **Rock Bunting** have grey lesser coverts; juvenile **Yellowhammer** have chestnut rump; **Corn Bunting** is bigger (16-19 mm) and without white on outermost tail feathers.



Rock Bunting. Juvenile.

Cirl Bunting. Juvenile.



Corn Bunting

SEXING

In **spring**, **male** with grey crown and line under the “moustache”; crown without streaks; band on breast wide and unstreaked. **Female** with greenish crown and line under the “moustache”; crown with streaks; band on breast streaked dark (**CAUTION:** birds with crown and breast slightly streaked must not be sexed). In **autumn**, and with **adult** birds, only males with breeding plumage can be sexed since, after **postbreeding** moult, **males** similar to **females** can be found **Juveniles** and **1st year** birds cannot be sexed using plumage characters.

AGEING

4 types of age can be recognized:

Juvenile with fresh plumage; greater coverts with white edge; the two outermost tail feathers without white or with only a little.

1st year autumn usually with moult limits between moulted and retained greater coverts (**CAUTION:** some birds moult all greater coverts); all flight feathers with only one age; the two outermost tail feathers without white tips, or with only a little on the outermost one; tail feathers are juvenile and usually pointed.

2nd year spring with similar wear than the **adult** and very difficult to separate; recognized only if retain juvenile tail feathers or greater coverts; flight feathers with only one age.

Adult in autumn without moult limits on wing coverts; greater coverts with reddish edges; if moult is stopped then with two generations of flight feathers; the two outermost tail feathers with white tips; tail feathers fresh and rounded; in **spring** all wing coverts and tail feathers with adult pattern (**CAUTION:** due to prebreeding moult can have two ages of greater coverts); sometimes with to ages of flight feathers.

MOULT

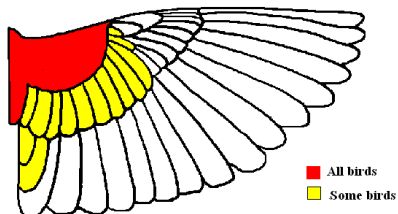
Complete **postbreeding** moult; usually finished in October; some birds stop moult to finish in wintering quarters. Partial **postjuvenile** moult including body feathers and lesser and median coverts; some birds change a variable number of greater coverts and tertials; usually finished late september before migration. Both types of age have a **prebreeding** moult more extense in **2nd year** birds.

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PHENOLOGY

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



Ortolan Bunting. Extent of postjuvenile moult.

STATUS IN ARAGON

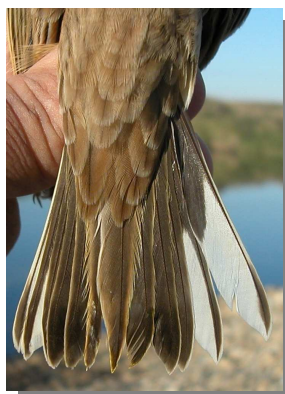
Summer visitor breeding in the mountainous areas of the Region.



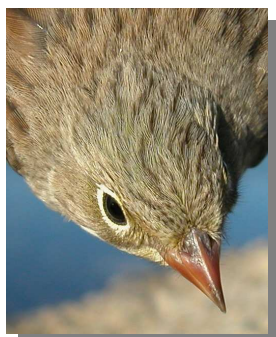
Ortolan Bunting. Autumn. 1st year: upperparts pattern (27-IX).



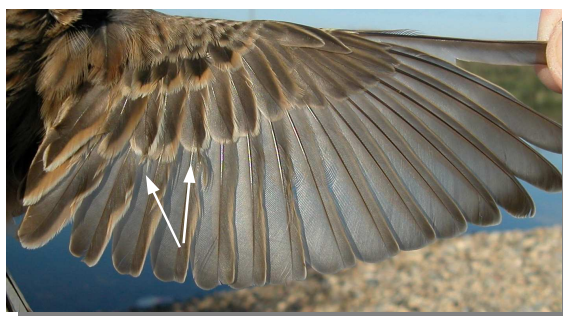
Ortolan Bunting. Autumn. 1st year: head pattern (27-IX).



Ortolan Bunting. Autumn. 1st year: tail pattern (27-IX).



Ortolan Bunting. Autumn. 1st year: crown pattern (27-IX).



Ortolan Bunting. Autumn. 1st year: pattern of wing (27-IX).



Ortolan Bunting. Autumn. 1st year: breast pattern (27-IX).