

269 Little Owl



Little Owl. Spring. Adult. Male (04-IV).

LITTLE OWL (*Athene noctua*)

IDENTIFICATION

21-27 cm. Brownish upperparts, with white spots; breast white and brown streaked; brown flight feathers tinged white and buff; tail barred pale buff; head lacking tufts; green yellowish bill; yellow eyes.



Little Owl. Pattern of head, bill and wing.



SIMILAR SPECIES

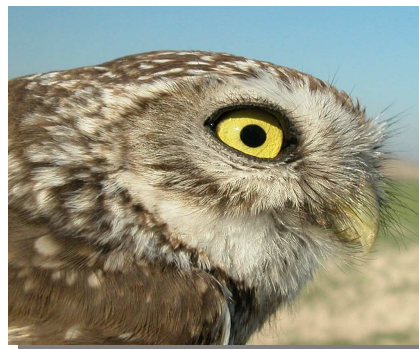
Scops Owl has similar size (a bit smaller) and yellow eyes, but has tufts on head and breast and underparts are streaked



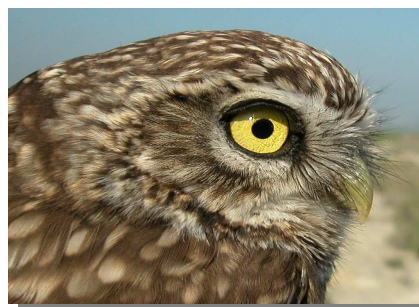
Scops Owl

SEXING

Both sexes with similar plumage but **males** tend to have whiter faces than **females**. Size can be useful in extreme birds: **male** with wingspan shorter than 543 mm and weigh smaller than 140 gr.; **female** with wingspan longer than 580 mm and weigh bigger than 180 gr.



Little Owl. Adult. Sexing. Head pattern: top male; bottom female.



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AGEING

4 types of age can be recognized:

Juvenile with brown upperparts and head; without or with only few white spots; crown feathers with narrow brown edge; fresh wing feathers; tip of 10th primary is pointed; secondaries with pointed and poorly defined tips.

1st year autumn/2nd year spring similar to **adults** but with moult limit between moulted outermost greater coverts (dark grey and with a large white patch) and juvenile inner ones (brown and with a small buff patch) and primary coverts; secondaries with pointed tips; 10th primary with pointed tip.

2nd year autumn/3rd year spring only in a little number of birds with some retained **juvenile** secondary.

Adult with all wing feathers similar; 10th primary with rounded tip; secondaries with rounded and well defined tips; if two ages of secondaries are found then both are with **adult** pattern.



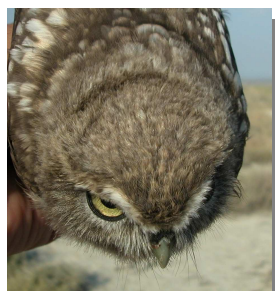
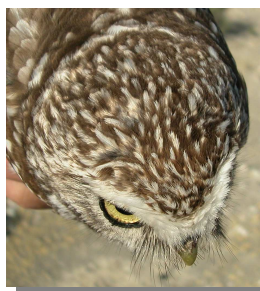
Little Owl. Ageing. Pattern of tip of 10th primary: top adult; bottom juvenile.



Little Owl. Adult. Ageing. Head pattern: top adult; bottom juvenile.



Little Owl. Adult. Ageing. Pattern of tips of secondaries: left adult; right juvenile.



Little Owl. Adult. Ageing. Crown pattern: left adult; right juvenile.

MOULT

Complete **postbreeding** moult, usually finished in November. Partial **postjuvenile** moult including body feathers, lesser and median coverts and the outermost greater coverts; usually finished late October.

PHENOLOGY

| I | II | III | IV | V | VI | VII | VIII | IX | X | XI | XII |
|---|----|-----|----|---|----|-----|------|----|---|----|-----|
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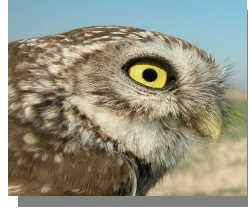
STATUS IN ARAGON

Resident, widely distributed throughout the Region, absent only from Northern areas.

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Little Owl. Spring. Adult. Female (04-IV).



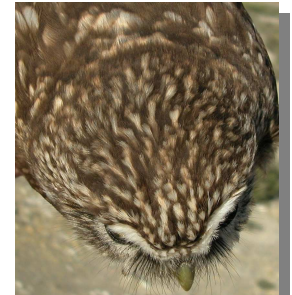
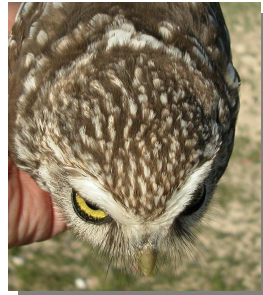
Little Owl. Spring. Adult. Head pattern: left male (04-IV); right female (04-IV).



Little Owl. Spring. Head pattern: left 2nd year (10-IV); right juvenile (02-VII).



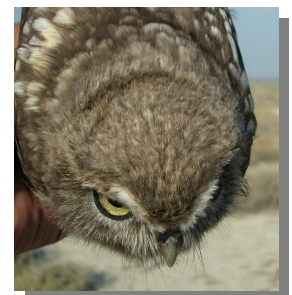
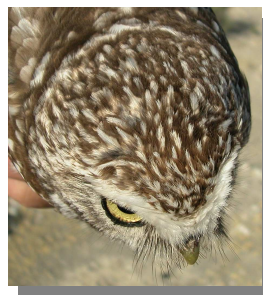
Little Owl. Spring. 2nd year (10-IV).



Little Owl. Spring. Adult. Crown pattern: left male (04-IV); right female (04-IV).



Little Owl. Spring. Juvenile (02-VII).



Little Owl. Spring. Crown pattern: left 2nd year (10-IV); right juvenile (02-VII).

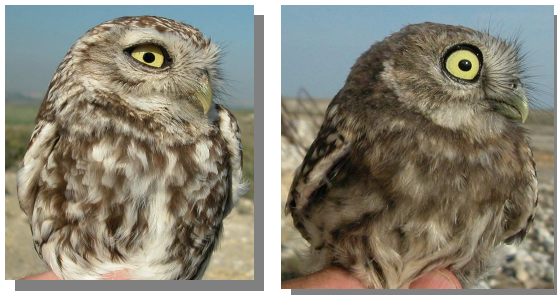
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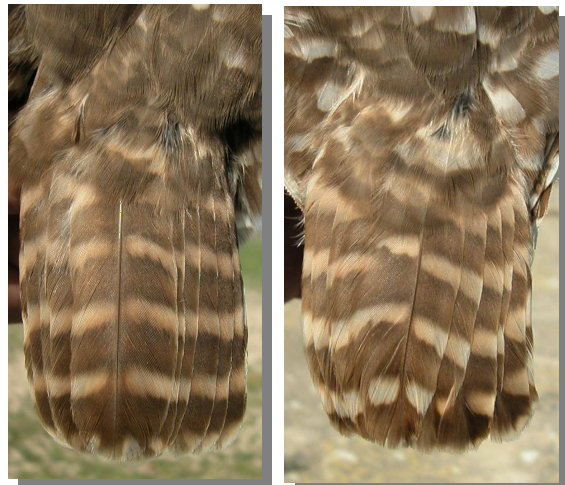
Little Owl. Spring. Adult. Breast pattern: left male (04-IV); right female (04-IV).



Little Owl. Spring. Upperparts pattern: left 2nd year (10-IV); right juvenile (02-VII).



Little Owl. Spring. Breast pattern: left 2nd year (10-IV); right juvenile (02-VII).



Little Owl. Spring. Adult. Upperparts pattern: left male (04-IV); right female (04-IV).



Little Owl. Spring. Tail pattern: top left adult (04-IV); top right 2nd year (10-IV); left juvenile (02-VII).

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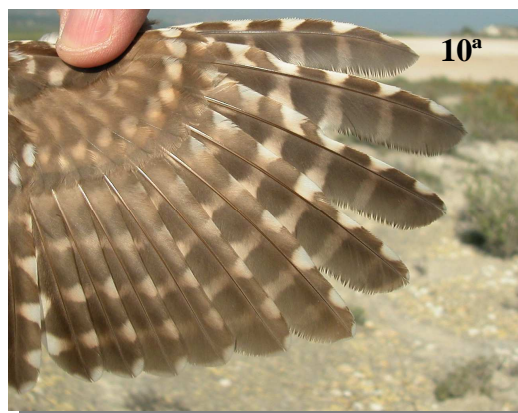
Little Owl. Spring. Adult: pattern of primary coverts (04-IV).



Little Owl. Spring. Adult: pattern of primaries (04-IV).



Little Owl. Spring. 2nd year: pattern of primary coverts (10-IV).

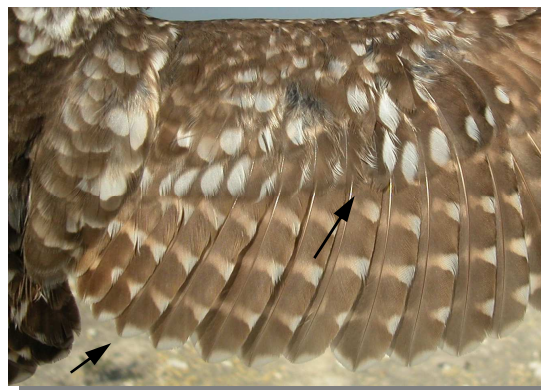
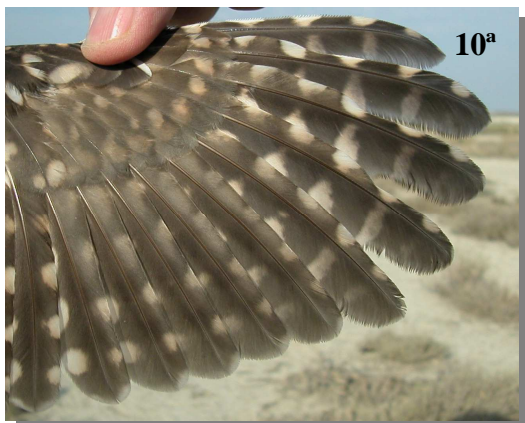


Little Owl. Spring. Juvenile: pattern of primary coverts (02-VII).



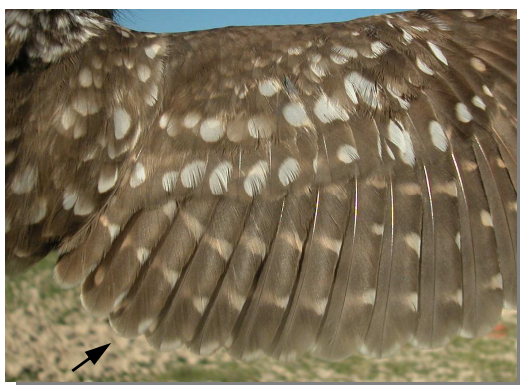
Little Owl. Spring. 2nd year: pattern of primaries (10-IV).

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Little Owl. Spring. Juvenile: pattern of primaries

Little Owl. Spring. 2nd year: pattern of secondaries (10-IV).



Little Owl. Spring. Adult: pattern of secondaries (04-IV).

Little Owl. Spring. Juvenile: pattern of secondaries (02-VII).

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Little Owl. Spring. Adult: pattern of wing (04-IV).



Little Owl. Autumn. Adult. Male (05-XI).



Little Owl. Spring. 2nd year: pattern of wing (10-IV).



Little Owl. Autumn. Adult. Female (05-XI).

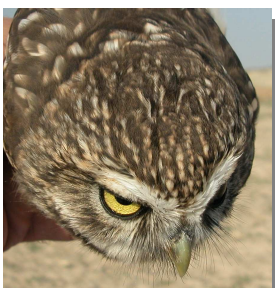
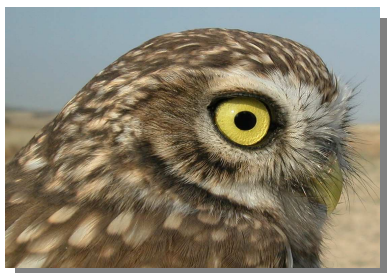


Little Owl. Spring. Juvenile: pattern of wing (02-VII).



Little Owl. Autumn. 1st year (05-XI).

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Little Owl. Autumn. Head pattern: top adult male (05-XI); middle adult female (05-XI); bottom 1st year (05-XI).



Little Owl. Autumn. Breast pattern: top left adult male (05-XI); top right adult female (05-XI); left 1st year (05-XI).

Little Owl. Autumn. Upperparts pattern: top left adult male (05-XI); top right adult female (05-XI); left 1st year (05-XI).

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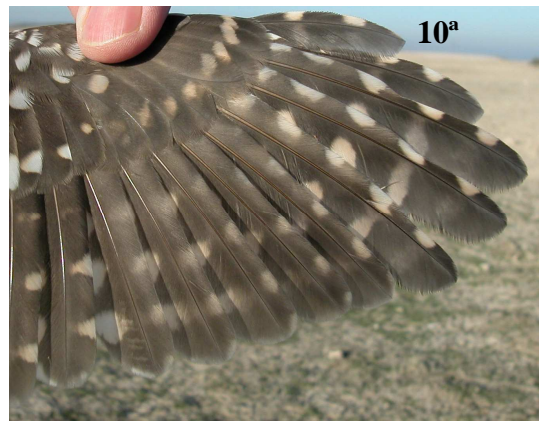
Little Owl. Autumn. Tail pattern: left adult (05-XI); right 1st year (05-XI).



Little Owl. Autumn. Pattern of tips on secondaries: left adult (05-XI); right 1st year (05-XI).



Little Owl. Autumn. Adult: pattern of primary coverts (05-XI).

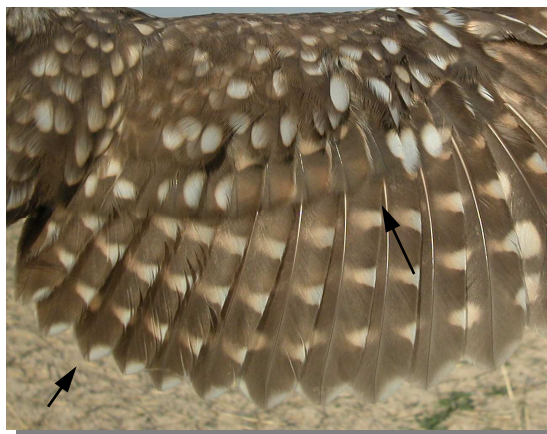


Little Owl. Autumn. 1st year: pattern of primary coverts (05-XI).



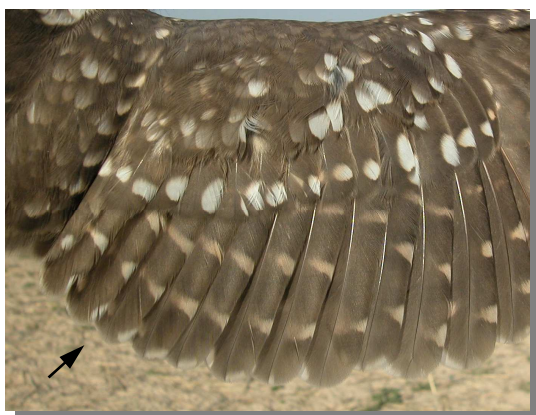
Little Owl. Autumn. Adult: pattern of primaries (05-XI).

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Little Owl. Autumn. 1st year: pattern of primaries (05-XI).

Little Owl. Autumn. 1st year: pattern of secondaries (05-XI).



Little Owl. Autumn. Adult: pattern of wing (05-XI).

Little Owl. Autumn. Adult: pattern of secondaries (05-XI).

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Little Owl. Autumn. 1st year: pattern of wing (05-XI).