Javier Blasco-Zumeta & Gerd-Michael Heinze Laboratorio Virtual Ibercaja

**147** **Water Rail**



**AGEING**

3 types of age can be recognized:

**Juvenile** with white/buff breast; pale brown iris;pale brown bill.

**1st year autumn/2nd year spring** similar to **adults** but with prominent buff or off-whitestreak running from base or upper mandible to upper part of eye; white chin; iris fawn to bright orange brown; juvenile flight feathers retained.

**Adult** with breast and chin slate grey; reddishiris.



Water Rail. Spring. Adult (06-VI).

**WATER RAIL** (*Rallus aquaticus*)

**IDENTIFICATION**

25-28 cm. Brown reddish upperparts, with dark streaks; grey slate chin and breast; grey belly streaked white; white undertail coverts; long and reddish bill. **Juveniles** paler; pale supercilium; whitish underparts; pale brown



Water Rail. Pattern of breast and upperparts.

**SIMILAR SPECIES**

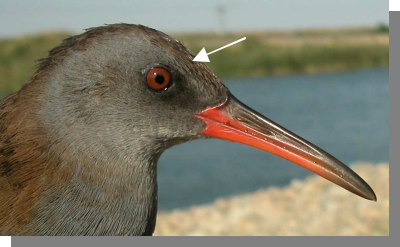
Long and red bill makes this species unmistakable.

**SEXING**

Plumage of both sexes alike. Size can be an useful character in most of the specimens: **male** with wing longer than 122 mm; tarsus longer than 42 mm. **Female** with wing shorter than 120 mm; tarsus shorter than 40 mm. Most of the **juveniles** can be sexed using size differences.

Water Rail.

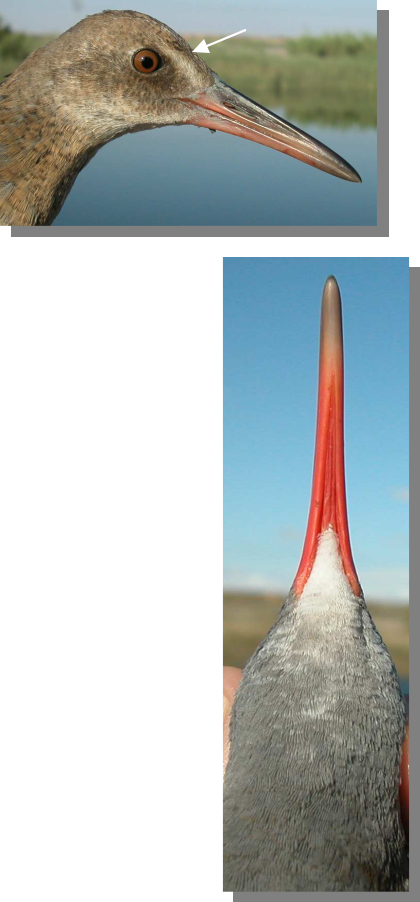
A g e i n g .



Pattern of

head a nd streak on the eye: top adult;

;middle 1st year; bottom juvenile.



W a t e r R a i l . A g e i n g . Pattern of chin: left adult; right 2nd year.

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**MOULT**

Complete **postbreeding** moult, usually finished in November. Partial **postjuvenile** moult confined only to body feathers; often finished between July and October depending of fledging date. Both types of age have a **prebreeding** moult confined to body.

**PHENOLOGY**

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

**STATUS EN ARAGON**

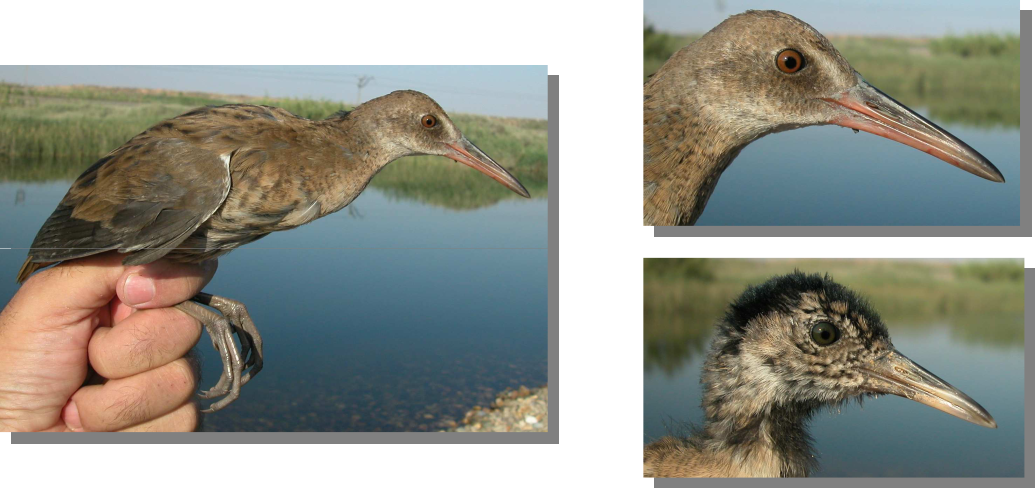
Resident, distributed in Gallocanta, Canal de

Water Rail. Spring. Young (14-VII)

Berdun and rivers Ebro, Jalon and Piedra.



Water Rail. Spring. 2nd year (14-V)



Water Rail. Spring. Head pattern and iris colour. From top to b o t t o m :

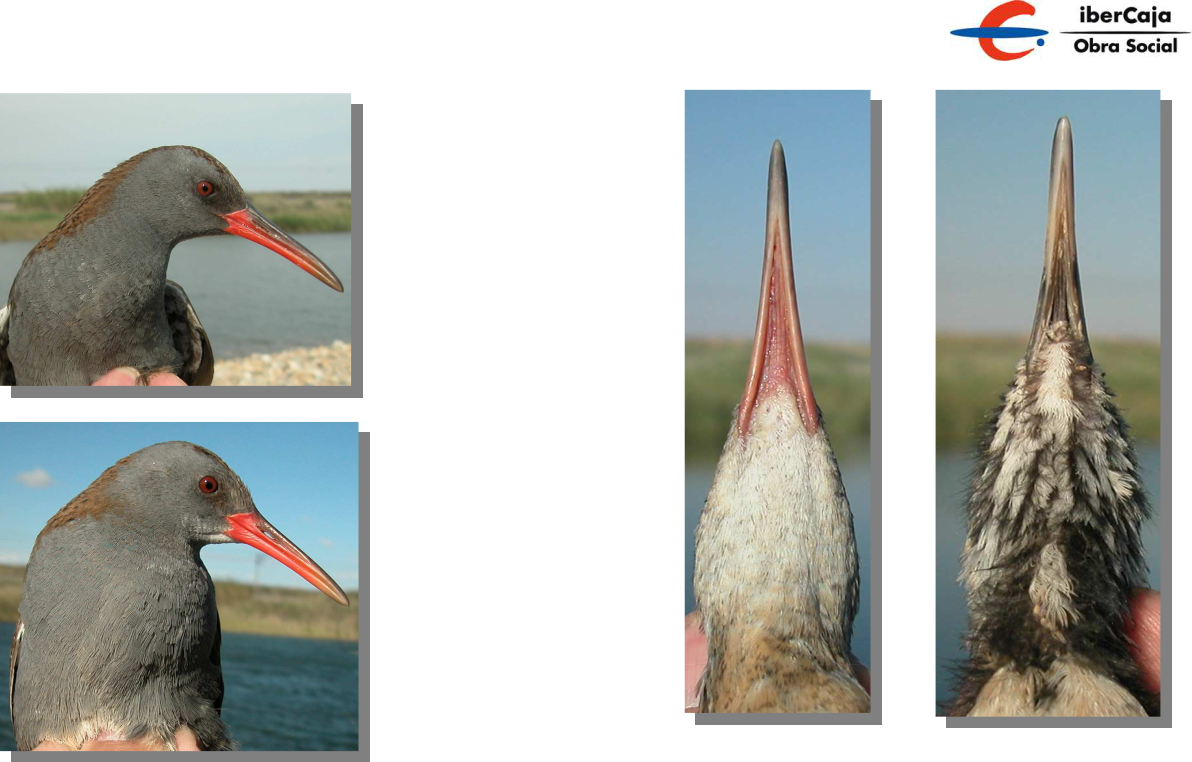
adult (06-VI); 2nd year (14-V); juvenile (14-VII); young

Water Rail. Spring. Juvenile (14-VII)

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**147** **Water Rail**



Water Rail.

S p r i n g .

B r e a s t

pattern: top

adult (06-

VI); middle

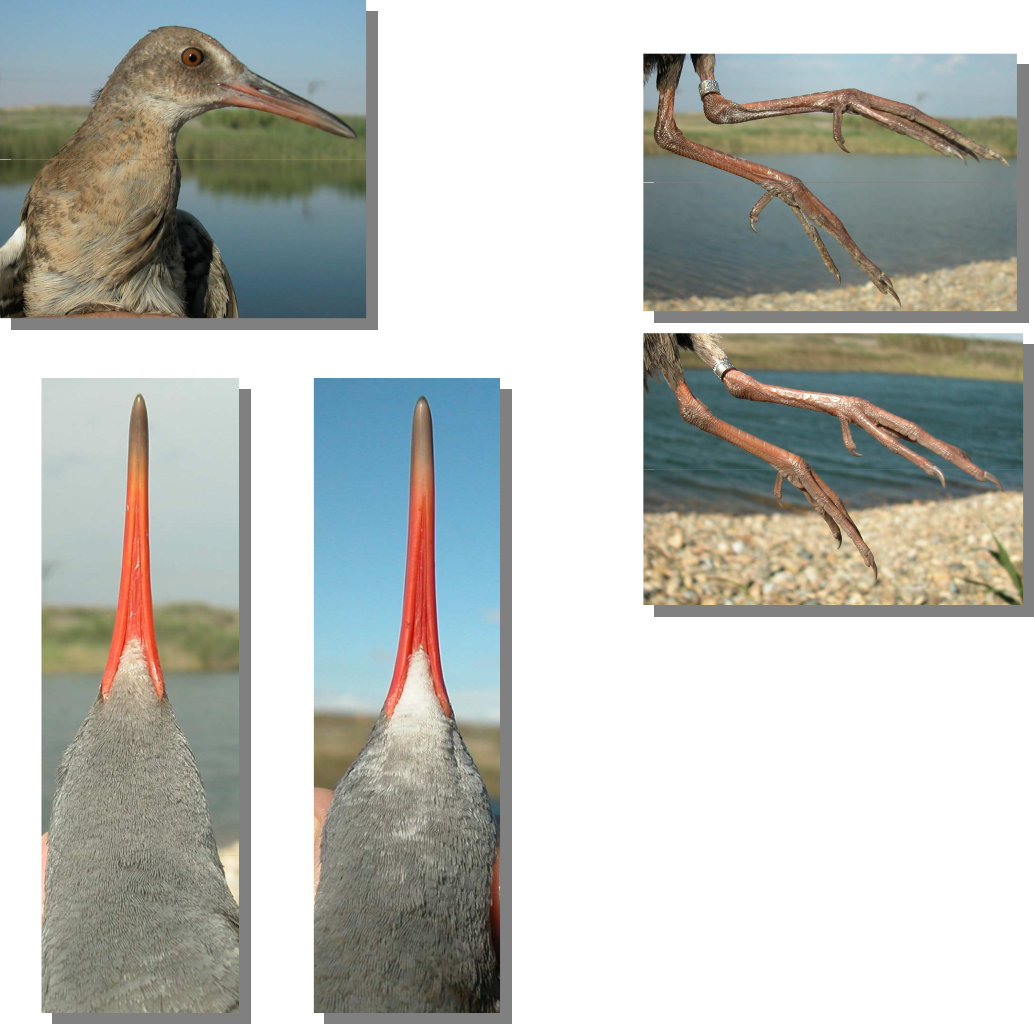
2nd year (14-

V); bottom

juvenile (14-

VII).

Water Rail. Spring. Chin pattern: left juvenile (14-VII); right young (14-VII).



Water Rail.

S p r i n g .

Pattern of

legs. From

t o p t o b o t t o m :



adult (06-VI); 2nd year (14-V); juvenile (14-VII); young (14-VII).



Water Rail. Spring. Chin pattern: left adult (06-VI); right 2nd year (14-V).

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