

44 Purple Heron



Purple Heron. Adult. Male (10-IX).

PURPLE HERON (*Ardea purpurea*)

IDENTIFICATION

70-90 cm. Slate upperparts and wing coverts, with chestnut scapulars in breeding plumage; chestnut underparts; neck chestnut with two black lateral lines; yellowish legs and bill. **Juveniles** with buff upperparts.



Purple Heron. Pattern of upperparts and head.

SIMILAR SPECIES

Confusion only possible with **Grey Heron**, which has grey neck and wing coverts and pale underparts.



Grey Heron



SEXING

Plumage of both sexes quite alike although **male** with upperparts more glossy purple than **female**. Size can be an useful character in extreme birds (only **adults**): **male** with wing longer than 375 mm; bill longer than 125 mm; **female** with wing shorter than 355 mm; bill shorter than 120 mm.



Purple Heron. Sexing. Pattern of scapulars: left male; right female.

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AGEING

3 types of age can be recognized:

Juvenile with neck without lateral lines; dark brown upperparts and wing coverts with broad buff edges; under neck and breast pale buff with brown straked.

2nd year with 2 types of plumages: some birds have **juvenile** plumage but with ornamental feathers on scapulars and breast. Another birds are similar to **adults** but can be recognized by their worn feathers (mainly late summer), chestnut feathers admixed with black on crown and upperparts less glossy than **adults**.

Adult with black crown, fresh flight feathers; glossy feathers on upper and underparts.



Purple Heron. Ageing. Pattern of head and neck: left adult; right juvenile.



Purple Heron. Ageing. Pattern of wing coverts: top adult; bottom juvenile.

MOULT

Complete **postbreeding** moult, usually starting in June and finished in winter quarters. Partial **postjuvenile** moult confined to body feathers and some wing coverts. Partial **prebreeding** moult confined only to ornamental feathers on nape.

PHENOLOGY

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

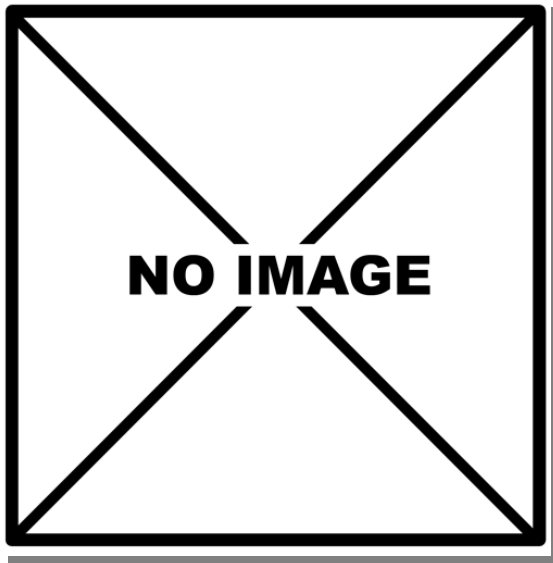
STATUS IN ARAGON

Summer visitor, very scarce breeder with records only in the Ebro Basin.

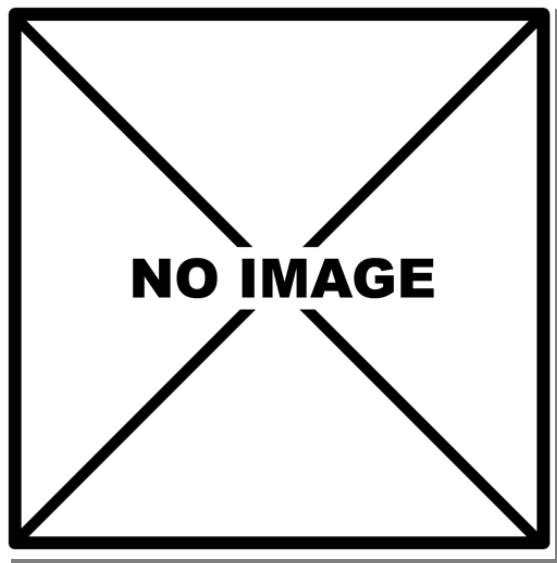


Purple Heron. Adult. Female (22-IV).

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Purple Heron. 2nd year with adult-like pattern ().



Purple Heron. 2nd year with juvenile-like pattern ().

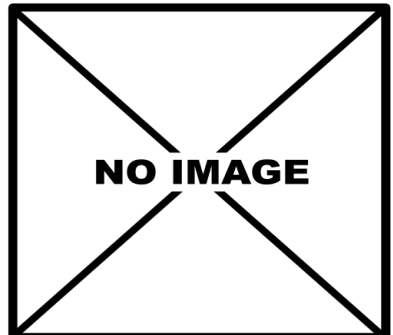
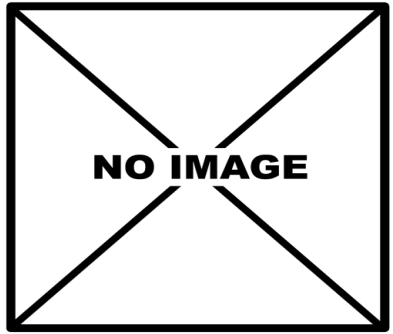


Purple Heron. Juvenile (10-IX).

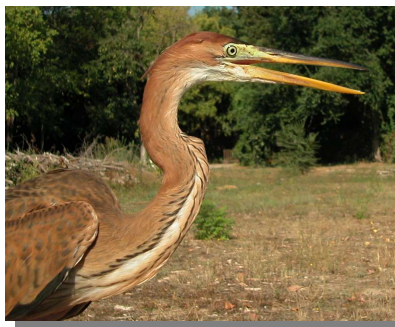
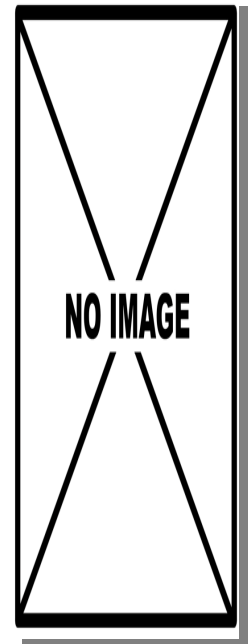
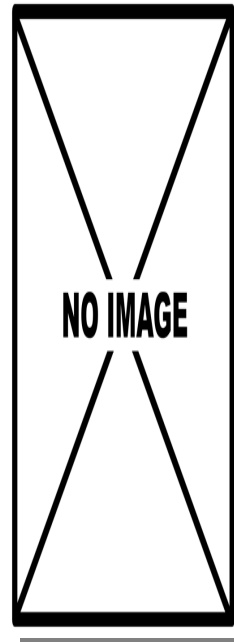


Purple Heron. Adult. Pattern of head and ornamental feathers of neck: top male (10-IX); bottom female (22-IV).

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P u r p l e
H e r o n . 2 n d
y e a r . P a t t e r n
o f h e a d a n d
o r n a m e n t a l
f e a t h e r s o f
n e c k : t o p
w i t h a d u l t -
l i k e p a t t e r n
() ; b o t t o m
w i t h j u v e n i l e -
l i k e p a t t e r n () .



P u r p l e
H e r o n . J u v e n i l e .
P a t t e r n o f
h e a d a n d
o r n a m e n t a l
f e a t h e r s o f
n e c k (1 0 - I X) .



P u r p l e H e r o n . C r o w n
p a t t e r n : t o p l e f t 2 n d
y e a r w i t h a d u l t - l i k e
p a t t e r n () ; t o p r i g h t
2 n d y e a r w i t h j u v e n i l e -
l i k e p a t t e r n () ; l e f t
j u v e n i l e (1 0 - I X) .

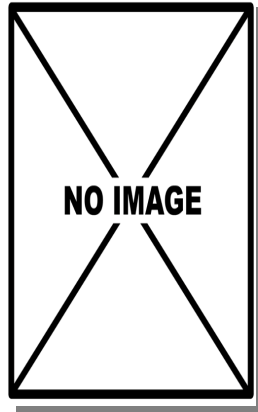
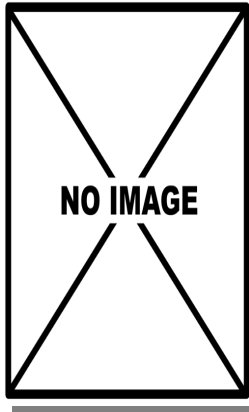


P u r p l e H e r o n . A d u l t . C r o w n p a t t e r n : l e f t m a l e (1 0 -
I X) ; r i g h t f e m a l e (2 2 - I V) .

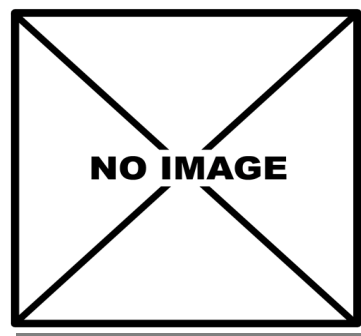
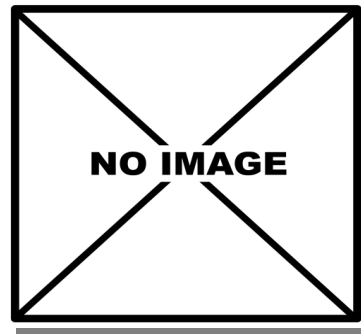
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Purple Heron. Adult. Nape pattern: left male (10-IX); right female (22-IV).



Purple Heron. Adult. Breast pattern: top male (10-IX); bottom female (22-IV).



Purple Heron. Nape pattern: top left with adult-like pattern (); top right with juvenile-like pattern (); left juvenile (10-IX).

Purple Heron. Breast pattern: top with adult-like pattern (); middle with juvenile-like pattern (); bottom juvenile (10-IX).

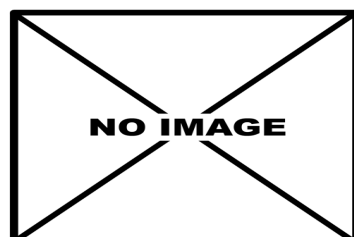
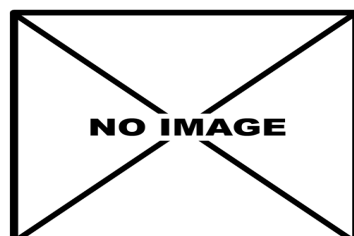
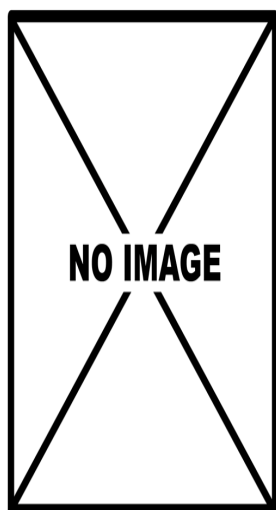
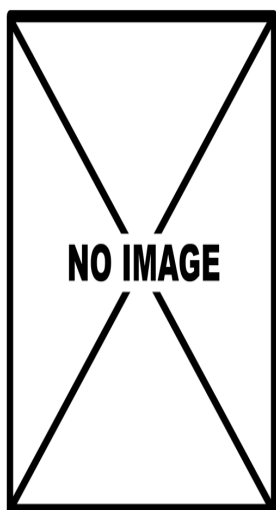


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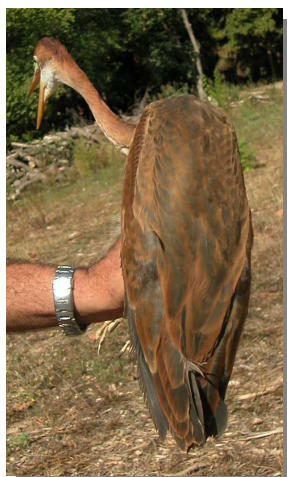


P u r p l e
H e r o n .
Adult. Legs
pattern: top
male (10-
IX); bottom
female (22-
IV).

Purple Heron. Adult. Upperpart pattern: left male (10-IX); right female (22-IV).



P u r p l e
H e r o n .
Legs
pattern: top
with adult-
like pattern
(); middle
w i t h
juvenile-like
pattern ();
b o t t o m
juvenile (10-
IX).



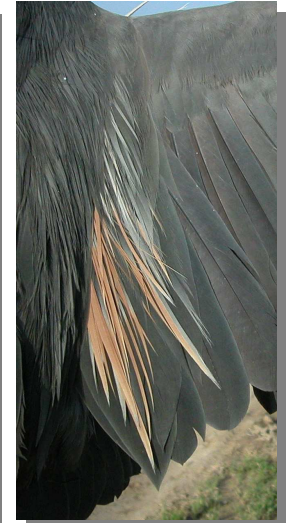
Purple Heron.
Upperpart pattern:
top left with adult-
like pattern (); top
right with juvenile-
like pattern (); left
juvenile (10-IX).



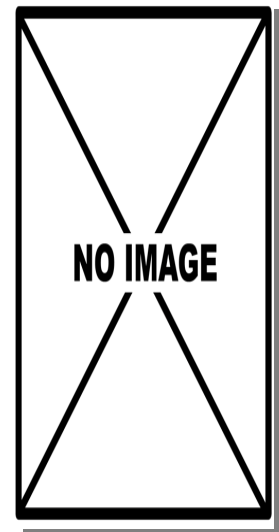
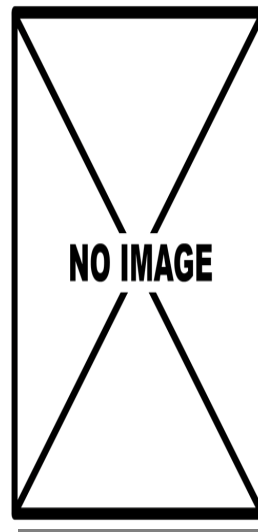
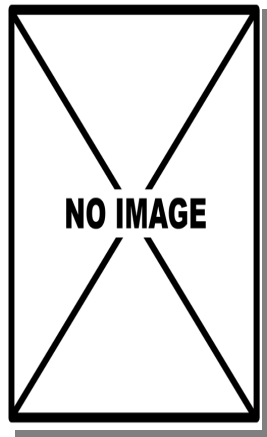
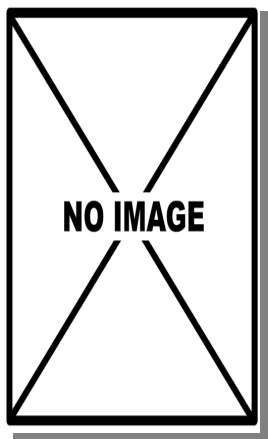
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Purple Heron. Adult. Tail pattern: left male (10-IX); right female (22-IV).



Purple Heron. Adult. Pattern of tertials: left male (10-IX); right female (22-IV).



Purple Heron. Tail pattern: top left with adult-like pattern (); top right with juvenile-like pattern (); left juvenile (10-IX).



Purple Heron. Pattern of tertials: top left with adult-like pattern (); top right with juvenile-like pattern (); left juvenile (10-IX).

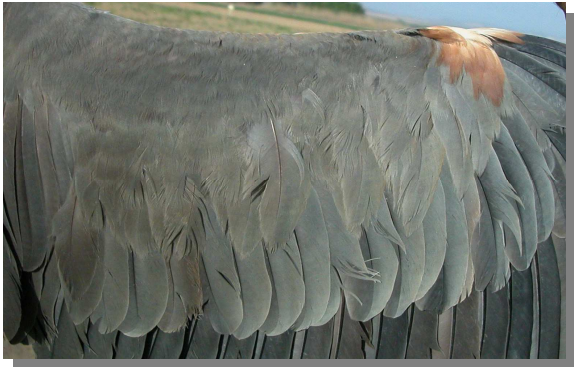
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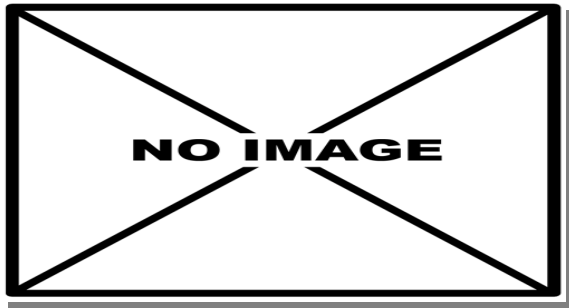
Purple Heron. Adult. Male: pattern of wing coverts (10-IX).



Purple Heron. Juvenile: pattern of wing coverts (10-IX).



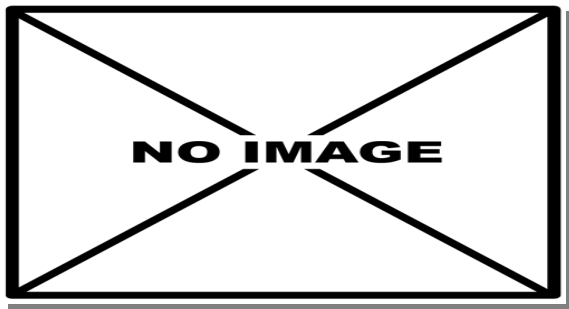
Purple Heron. Adult. Female: pattern of wing coverts (22-IV).



Purple Heron. 2nd year with adult-like pattern: pattern of wing coverts ().

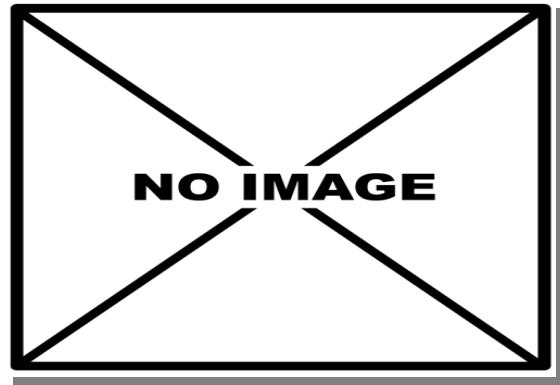
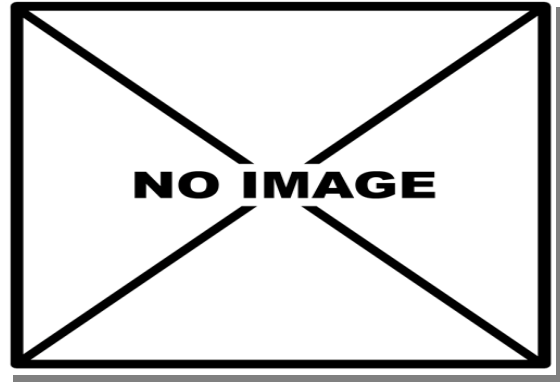


Purple Heron. Adult. Male: pattern of primaries (10-IX).



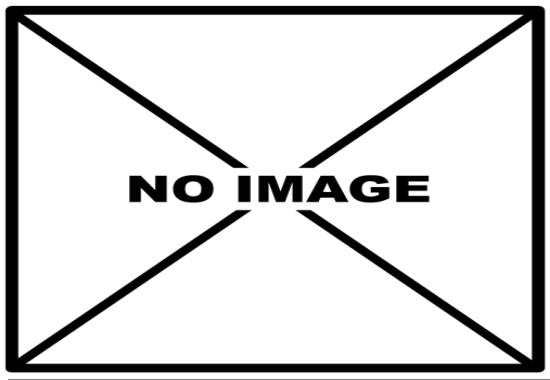
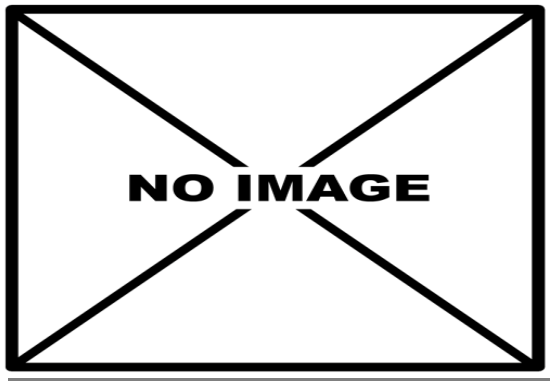
Purple Heron. 2nd year with juvenile-like pattern: pattern of wing coverts ().

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Purple Heron. Adult. Female: pattern of primaries (10-IX).

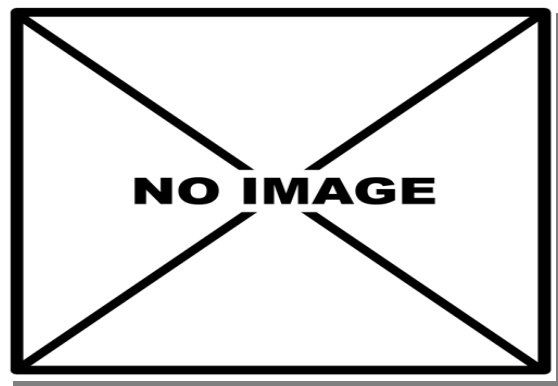
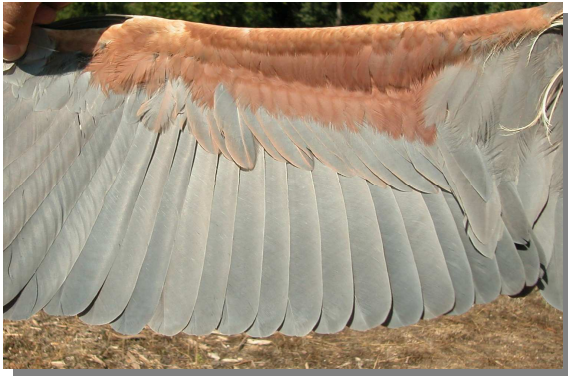
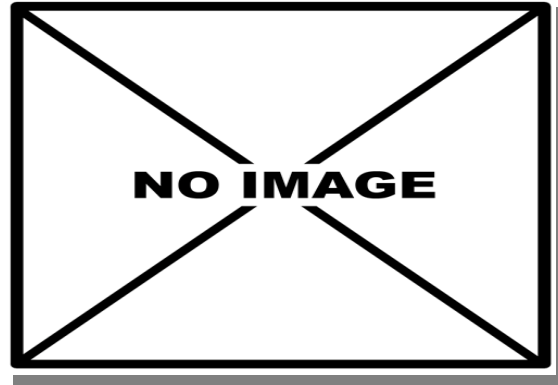
Purple Heron. 2nd year with juvenile-like pattern: pattern of primaries ().



Purple Heron. 2nd year with adult-like pattern: pattern of primaries ().

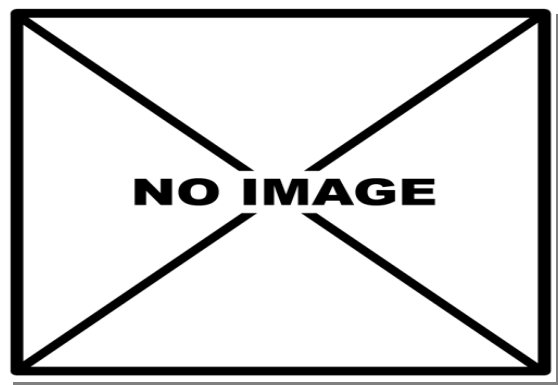
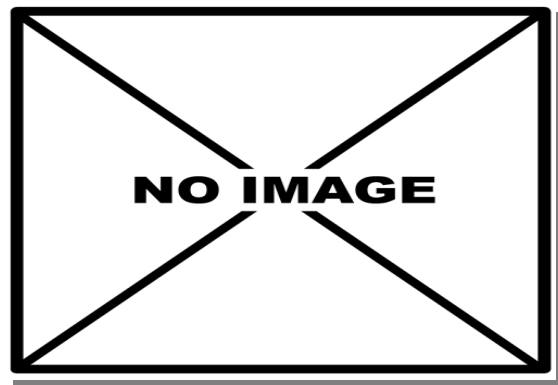
Purple Heron. Juvenile: pattern of primaries (10-IX).

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Purple Heron. Adult. Male: pattern of secondaries (10-IX).

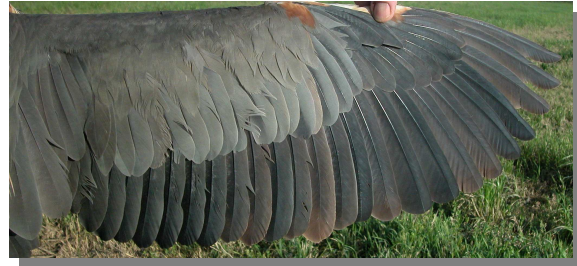
Purple Heron. 2nd year with adult-like pattern: pattern of secondaries ().



Purple Heron. Adult. Female: pattern of secondaries (22-IV).

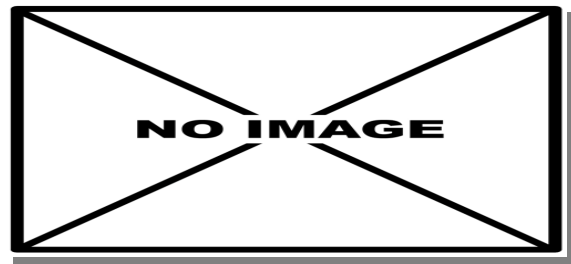
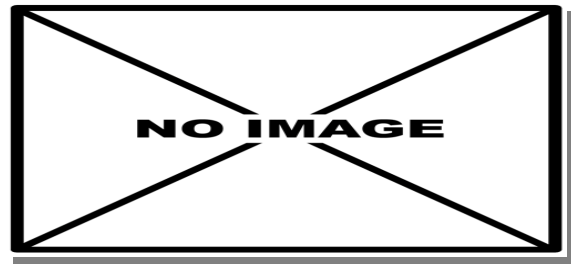
Purple Heron. 2nd year with juvenile-like pattern: pattern of secondaries ().

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Purple Heron. Adult. Female: pattern of wing (22-IV).

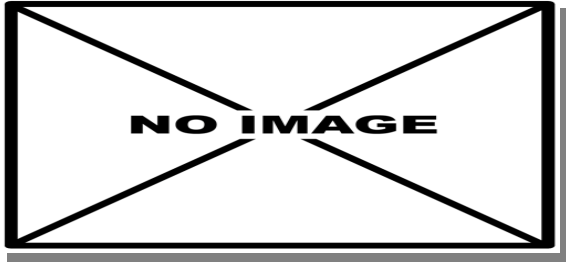
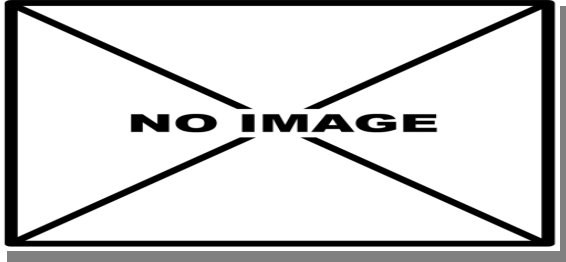
Purple Heron. Juvenile: pattern of secondaries (10-IX).



Purple Heron. 2nd year with adult-like pattern: pattern of wing ().

Purple Heron. Adult. Male: pattern of wing (10-IX).

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Purple Heron. 2nd year with juvenile-like pattern: pattern of wing ().



Purple Heron. Juvenile: pattern of wing (10-IX).