

Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus axillaris*

Species No.: 232 Band size: 10 SS



Adult



Juvenile



Juvenile

Adult

Adult

Juvenile

Morphometrics:

	Adult Male	Adult Female
Wing:	274 – 309 mm	283 – 318 mm
8 th Primary:	206 – 219 mm	205 – 222 mm
Tail:	133 – 155 mm	138 – 155 mm
Bill (cere):	16.7 – 19.6 mm	17.6 – 19.8 mm
Tarsus:	32.1 – 36.9 mm	35.7 – 37.0 mm
Weight:	181 – 295 g	270 – 340 g

Ageing:

	Adult (2+)	Juvenile
Bill:	black to grey-black;	black;
Cere:	light greyish-yellow to light yellow;	pale grey-yellow;
Iris:	orange-red to red;	black-brown to dark brown, but red pigment is evident soon after fledging;
Legs & feet:	orange-yellow to yellow;	pale grey-yellow;
Crown & nape:	white;	rufous-brown;
Upper breast:	white;	white, strongly washed rufous-brown, fading rapidly to buff-white or off-white;

Full adult plumage is attained in a moult commencing late in the first year, probably completed concurrently with adult post-breeding moult. Thus Immatures are aged (2-) and Adults (2+).

Sexing:

Adult females sometimes have a slightly darker back than their mates;
 Females are slightly larger than males, particularly in weight. Though there is some overlap between the sexes, a bird weighing over 300 g will be female;
 Female alone incubates.

Similar Species:

Letter-winged Kite – most obvious different features are the underwing pattern and black patch in front of eye does not extend beyond the orbital ring at the back of the eye (see separate field data sheet).