

Capture of a Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* with black legs

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A Willow Warbler Phylloscopus trochilus with black legs was captured during autumn migration at Hondo Natural Park (SE Spain). The plumage features and wing-formula were typical of this species, discounting the possibility of a hybrid with the Chiffchaff Phylloscopus collybita. Ringers should make detailed notes when trapping these unusual birds.

Key words: Willow Warbler, *Phylloscopus trochilus*, black legs.

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The leg colour of the Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* has been described as varying from pale brown (Williamson 1976) through medium or light dull brown to dark grey-brown (Svensson 1992), pale to dark brown (Cramp 1992) and occasionally almost as dark as in the Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*, but never completely black (Conder & Keighley 1950).

On 9th October 1996, during a mist-netting session carried out at Hondo Natural Park (Elche, Alicante Province, SE Spain, 38°16'N 00°41'W) a Willow Warbler with black tarsi was captured. At this site the species is considered to be a migrant, and the fat accumulation in the abdominal and interclavicular areas scored 3 (Fat score according to Bernis 1966). The plumage features were typical of a Willow Warbler in respect to the upperparts: brown olive with a yellowish-green tinge and a yellowish supercilium. The underparts were uniform

yellowish, suggesting a first-year bird. It was not possible to make a note of the complete wing-formula, but the 6th primary was not emarginated and the position of the second primary was equal to sixth primary. The wing length (maximum chord) was 65.5 mm. These features discard the possibility of its being a hybrid with the Chiffchaff (Norman 1994). Ringers should be aware of the possibility of trapping Willow Warblers with totally black legs and should record the full wing-formula in order to avoid confusion with Willow Warbler/Chiffchaff hybrids. *

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RESUM

Captura d'un Mosquiter de Passa Phylloscopus trochilus amb les potes negres

Aquesta nota dona compte de la captura de un Mosquiter de Passa Phylloscopus trochilus amb les potes negres. Les característiques del plomatge i la fórmula alar eren típiques d'aquesta espècie descartant la possibilitat d'un híbrid amb el Mosquiter Comú Phylloscopus collybita. Es recomana als anelladors que prenguin especial atenció quan capturin algun d'aquests ocells.

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