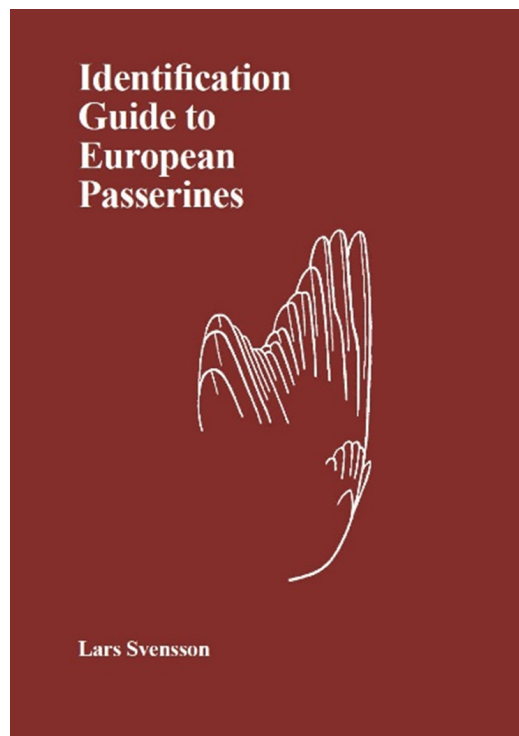


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## THE “BURGUNDY ONE”: 5<sup>TH</sup> EDITION OF THE RINGER’S BIBLE



**Svensson L., 2023.** Identification Guide to European Passerines. Lullula Förlag, Stockholm. 448 pp.

There is a small green guide in the library of every bird ringer. Its cover is simple, the edges worn, the pages yellowed with time, inside strange abbreviations and black-and-white sketches. Opening it feels like entering a world closed off to most people. A world where birds are studied one feather at a time and the entire life of a migrant can be inferred from the moult of its plumage. This is the fourth edition, published in 1992, of a leading guide in the field of bird ringing, which first saw the light in 1970.

Today, more than 50 years after the first edition and over 30 years since the last, “Identification Guide of European Passerines” is back, with a burgundy cover and several new updates.

The structure of the species accounts remains unchanged, designed to provide a simple and quick guide for identifying a bird in hand. After a brief introduction to the species’ general characteristics, the description of any subspecies follows, along with concise information on moult, age, and sex. When necessary, the texts are accompanied by schematic drawings.

The accounts are preceded by a comprehensive introduction - a guide within the guide - to measurement techniques, ageing, and sexing.

However, the similarities with previous editions end here. The text has been thoroughly revised and significantly expanded following a monumental update effort, both in the field and in museums, with measurements taken from hundreds of additional specimens. The taxonomy has been radically overhauled to reflect the latest IOC updates. For species that undergo partial post-juvenile moult, a brief but essential description of its extent has been added. The number of species described has increased from 229 in the previous edition to 267, thanks to splits, as well as the addition of vagrants of Asian and, to a lesser extent, African origin.

This guide, stripped of any superfluous elements, gets straight to the point - a key strength when working in the field. While many other similar excellent identification guides have emerged since the last edition, some featuring stunning colour images, Lars Svensson's magnum opus remains an indispensable resource. With this new edition, it is poised to continue educating a new generation of bird ringers for years to come.

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