



- The following pages have some identification markers for each of the Cuckoos found in India
- To know more on these birds you can visit <http://ogaclicks.com/cuckoo/>
- If you are interested in Coming on any of my tours or workshops please share your email id. I will keep you updated
- Mail me at [ogaclicks@gmail.com](mailto:ogaclicks@gmail.com)
- You can also call me on (91)9840119078 ,  
(91) 9445219078  
(91) 6369815812

# List of Cuckoos found in India

Sno.	Name	Binomial Name
1	Asian Emerald Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx maculatus</i>
2	Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamys scolopaceus</i>
3	Banded Bay Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis sonneratii</i>
4	Chestnut-winged Cuckoo	<i>Clamator coromandus</i>
5	Common Hawk Cuckoo	<i>Hierococcyx varius</i>
6	Eurasian Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
7	Grey-bellied Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis passerinus</i>
8	Himalayan Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus saturatus</i>
9	Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo	<i>Hierococcyx fugax</i>
10	Indian Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus micropterus</i>
11	Jacobin Cuckoo	<i>Clamator jacobinus</i>
12	Large hawk Cuckoo	<i>Hierococcyx sparverioides</i>
13	Lesser Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus poliocephalus</i>
14	Plaintive Cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis merulinus</i>
15	Violet Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus</i>

# Asian Emerald Cuckoo Identification Tips

**Asian Emerald Cuckoo : *Chrysococcyx maculatus*:** Summer visitor to East Himalayas & North East India

Glossy green crown

Eye-ring orange-red, iris red to red-brown

Glossy green Upperparts

Bill is orange with black tip

Tail is green ,  
underside of wing  
with white band

Chin & throat is glossy green

Breast is glossy green

Legs are green

**Male**

Green flight feathers ,  
primaries with dark tips

Iris brown

Bill is yellow  
with black tip

Rufous crown

Rufous nape,

Bronze-green upperparts

Tail is green , underside of wing barred chestnut and black

Underparts white  
with bronze bars

Legs are brown

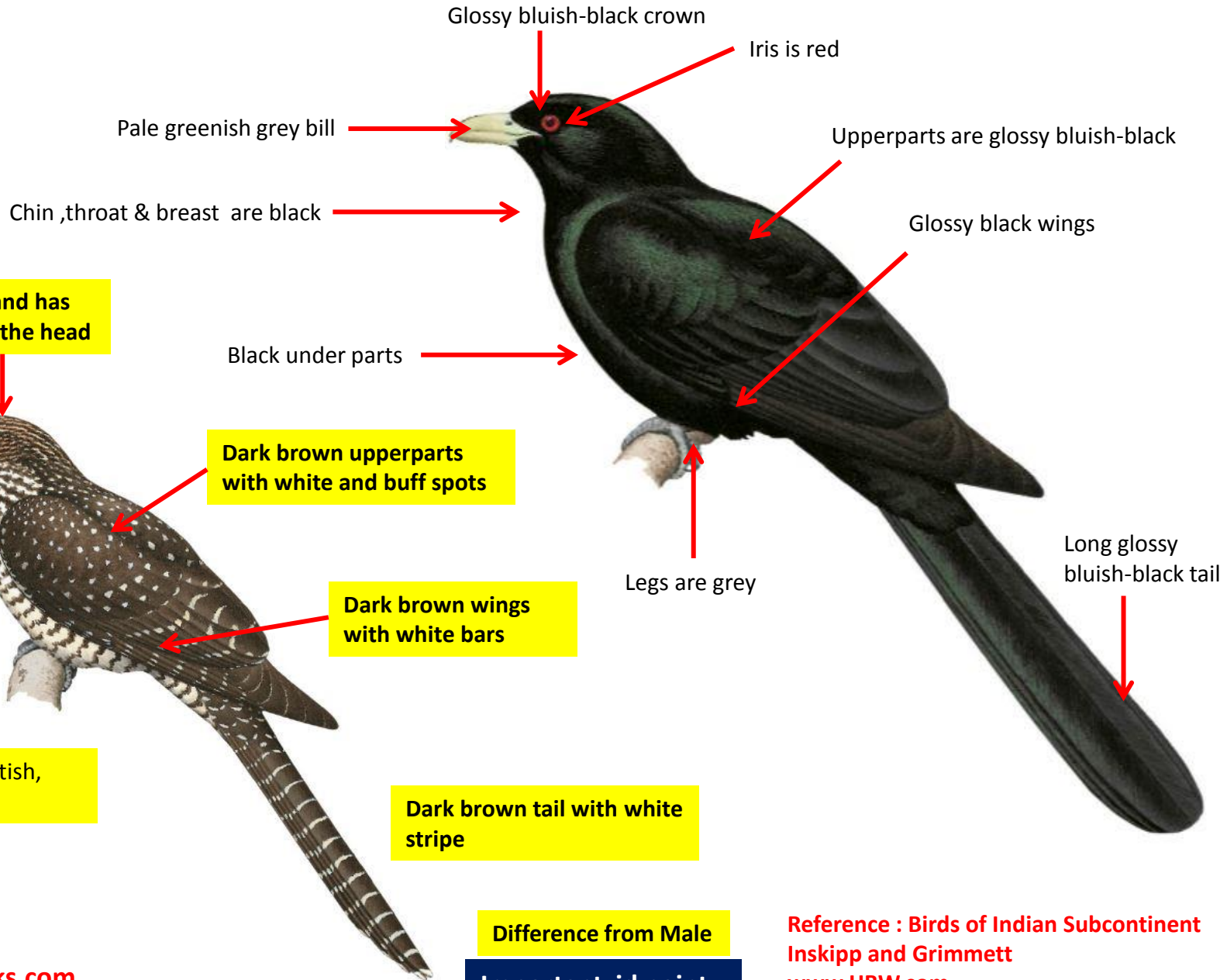
**Female**

Difference from Male

**Important id point**

# Asian Koel Identification Tips

**Asian Koel : *Eudynamys scolopaceus*:** Widespread resident in India



**Difference from Male**

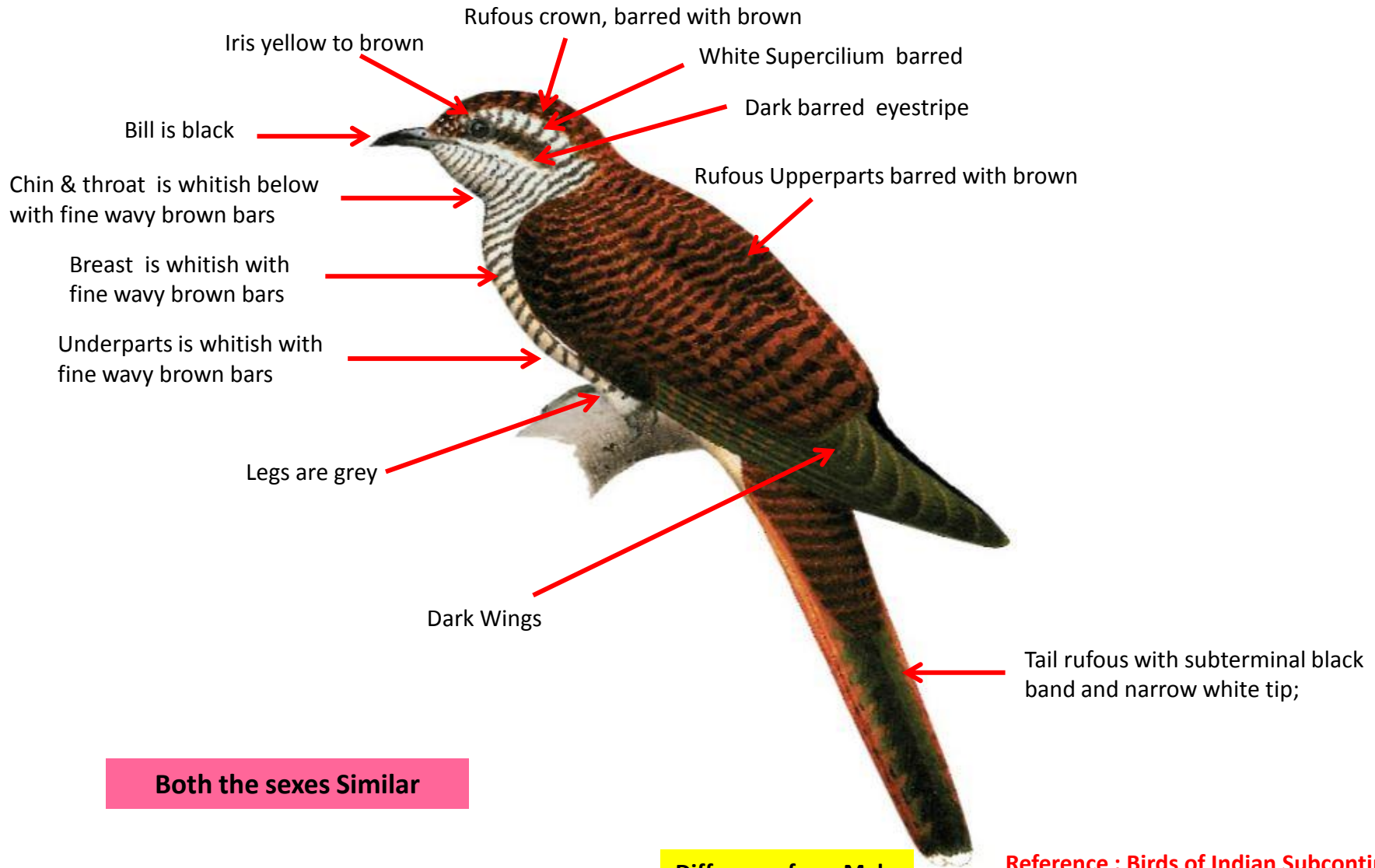
**Important id point**

**Reference : Birds of Indian Subcontinent  
Inskipp and Grimmett  
[www.HBW.com](http://www.HBW.com)**



## Banded Bay Cuckoo Identification Tips

**Banded Bay Cuckoo : *Cacomantis sonneratii***: Resident of western Ghats, West Tamilnadu, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Chattisgarh, Foothills of Himalayas & North East India



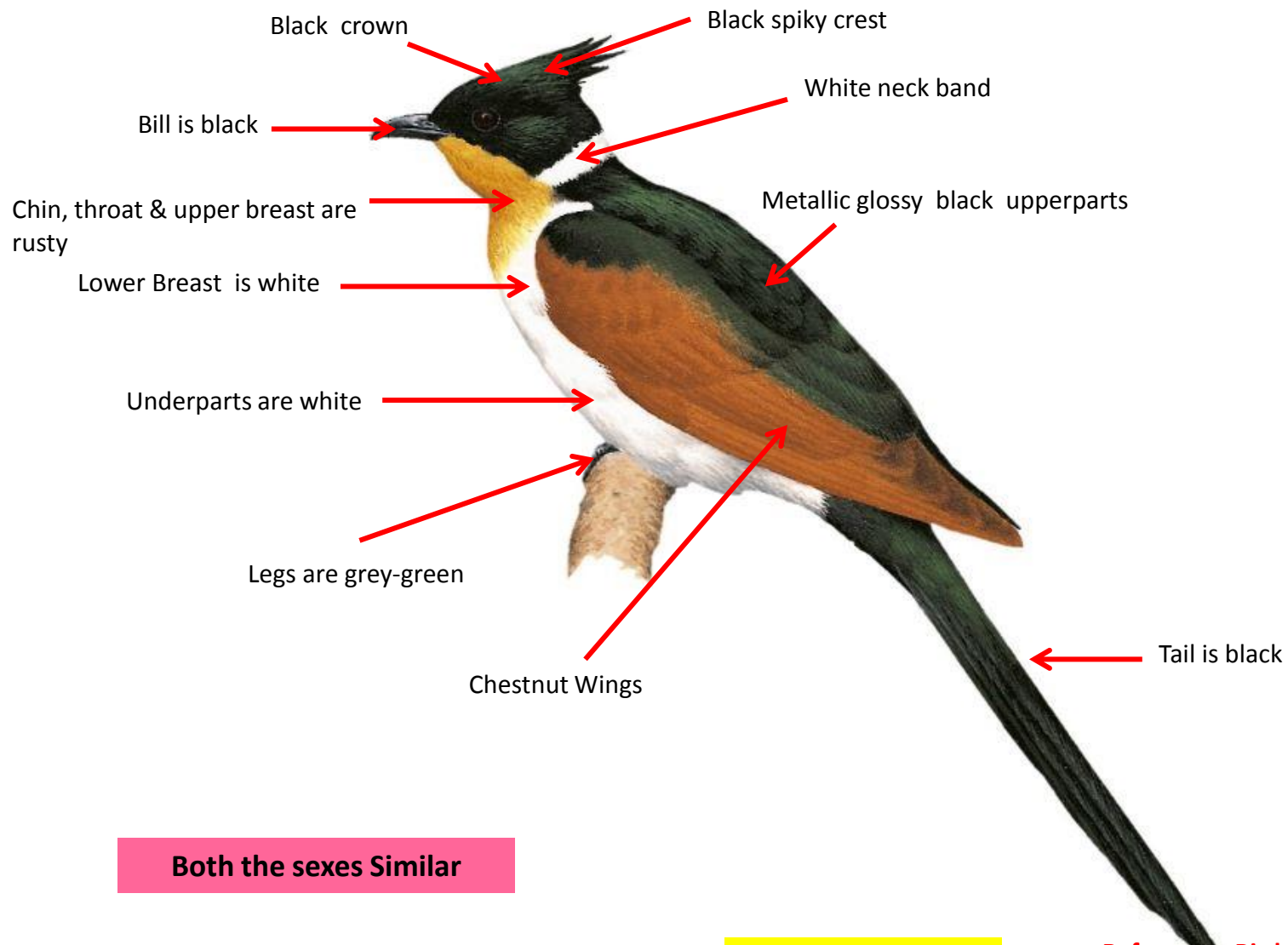
Difference from Male

Important id point

Reference : Birds of Indian Subcontinent  
Inskipp and Grimmett  
[www.HBW.com](http://www.HBW.com)

## Chestnut-winged Cuckoo Identification Tips

**Chestnut-winged Cuckoo : *Cacomantis sonneratii*:** Breeds in Himalayas & North East India, Winter Visitor to Tamil Nadu & Kerala in India



**Both the sexes Similar**

**Difference from Male**

**Important id point**

**Reference : Birds of Indian Subcontinent  
Inskipp and Grimmett  
[www.HBW.com](http://www.HBW.com)**

# Common Hawk Cuckoo Identification Tips

**Common Hawk Cuckoo : *Hierococcyx varius*:** Widespread resident (except Rajasthan & UT of Jammu & Kashmir & UT of Ladhak in India )

Bill is yellowish above and greenish below , black tips

Eye-ring pale grey, iris yellow

Ashy brownish grey crown

Chin & throat is White

Ashy brownish grey Upperparts

Breast is rufous

Underparts are white & barred with rufous bands

Ashy brownish grey Wings

Barred dull rufous head

Legs are yellow

White nape, rufous streaks

Brown upperparts

Both the sexes Similar

Tail is ashy brownish grey with Black Bands ( 3-5)

Underparts brown-streaked buffy-white

Tail is rufous ,barred black

Immature

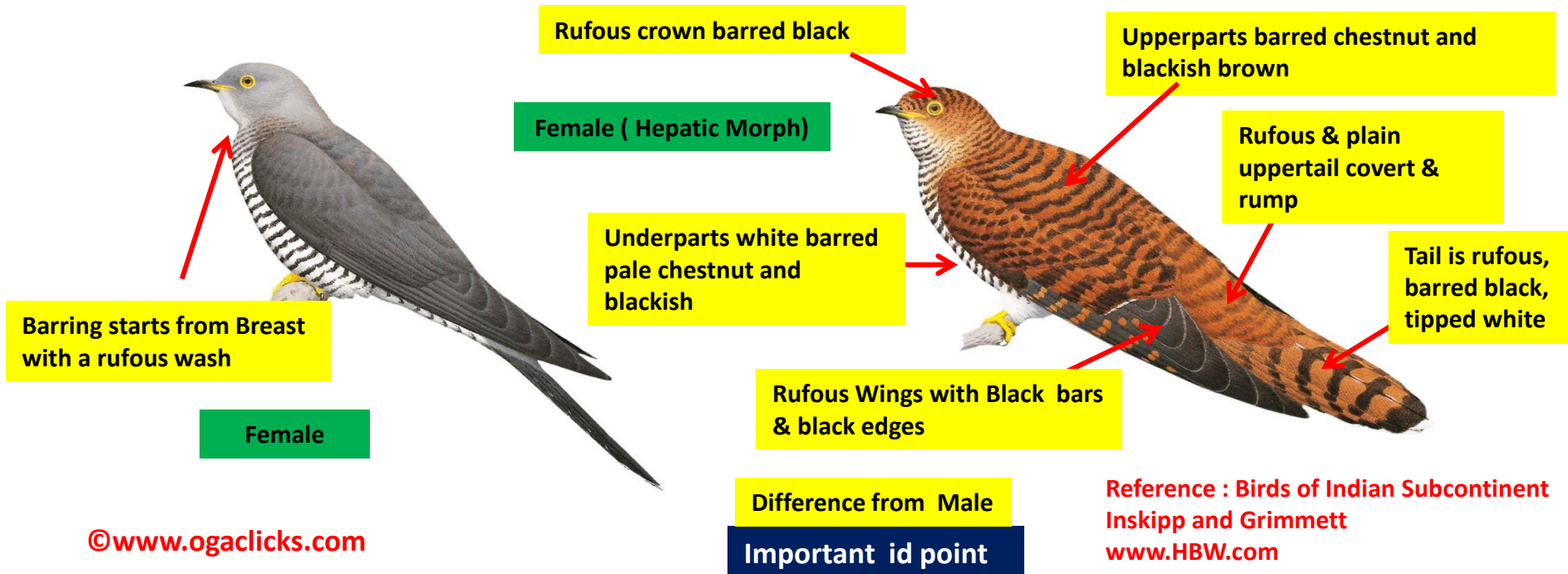
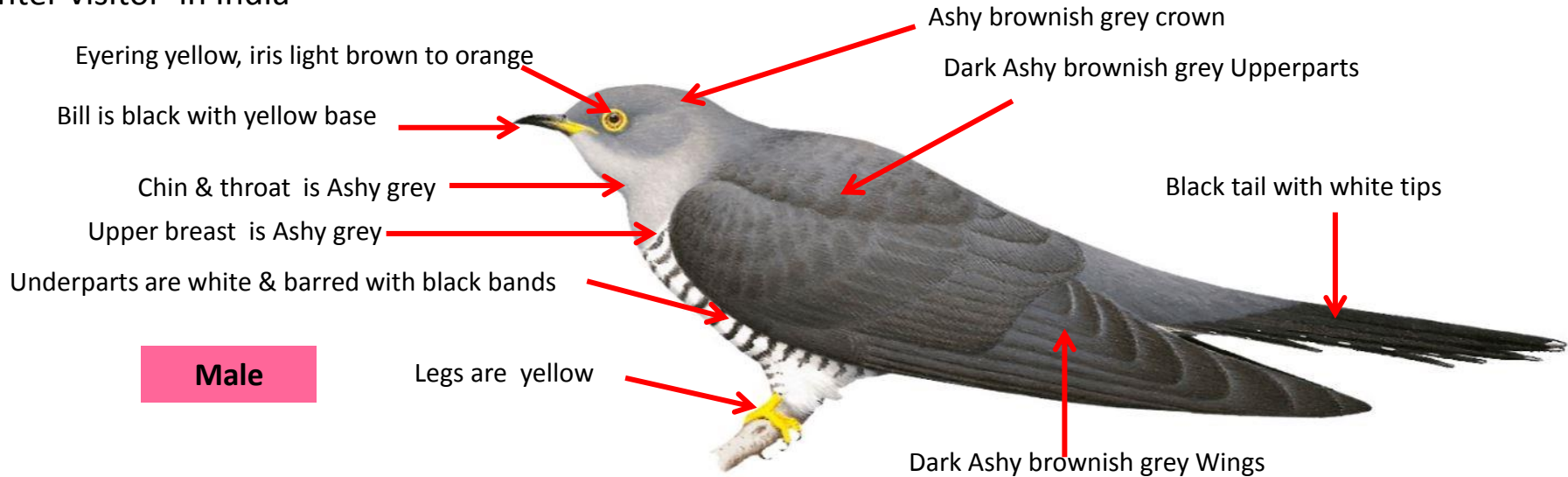
Difference from Adult

Important id point

Reference : Birds of Indian Subcontinent  
Inskipp and Grimmett  
[www.HBW.com](http://www.HBW.com)

# Eurasian Cuckoo Identification Tips

**Eurasian Cuckoo : *Cuculus canorus*** : Breeds in Himalayas, North, Central & North East India, Scattered winter visitor in India





## Grey-bellied Cuckoo Identification Tips

**Grey-bellied Cuckoo : *Cacomantis passerines*:** Summers in North up to Madhya Pradesh, Resident south wards in Peninsular India , Winters in Kerala ( not found in North East & North West India)

Eyering blackish to grey, iris red to brown

Bill is black with yellow base

Ashy brownish grey crown

Chin & throat is Ashy grey

Upper breast is Ashy grey

Dark Ashy brownish grey Upperparts

Legs are yellow

Rufous crown

Upperparts are bright rufous, barred with black or dark grey-brown

Throat & breast are rufous

Underparts dark-barred whitish

Tail is plain rufous except black subterminal band

Dark Ashy brownish grey Wings

Tail blackish with white tip

Male

Female ( Hepatic Morph)

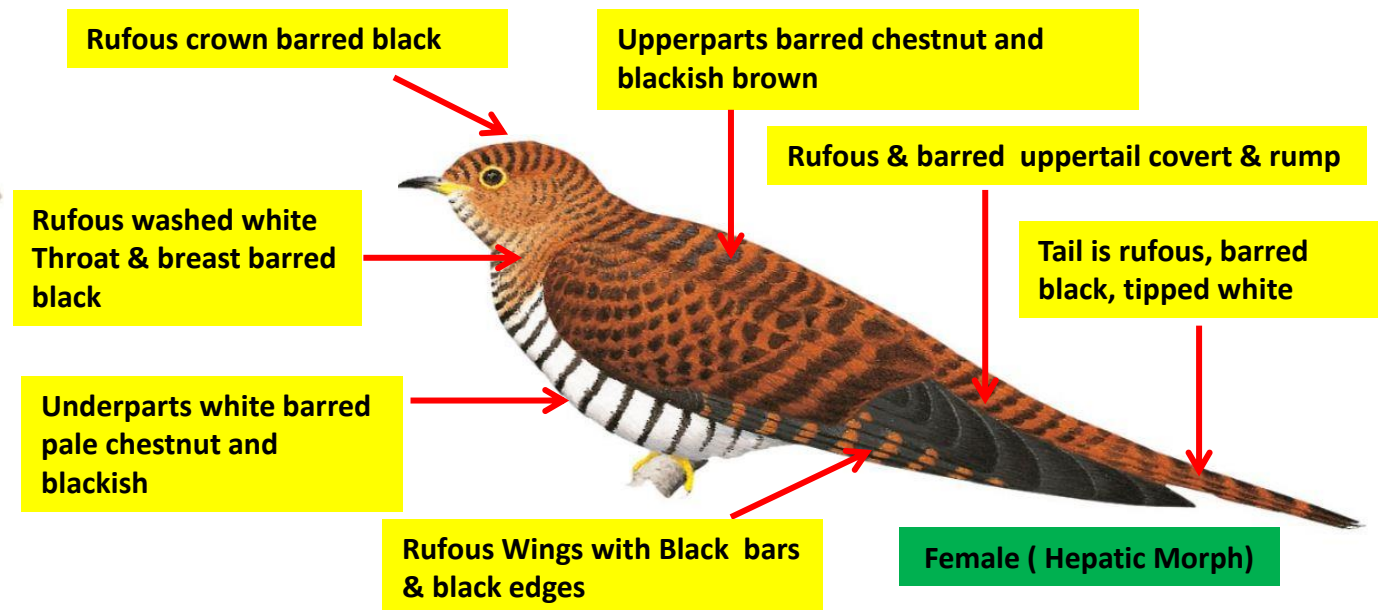
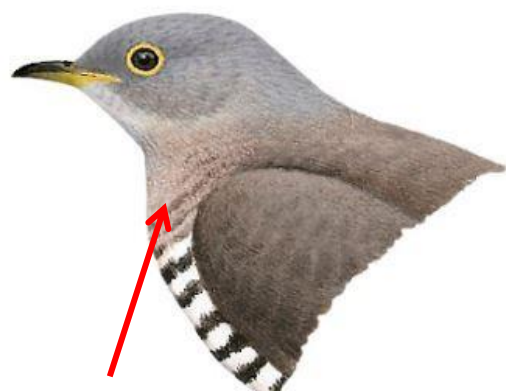
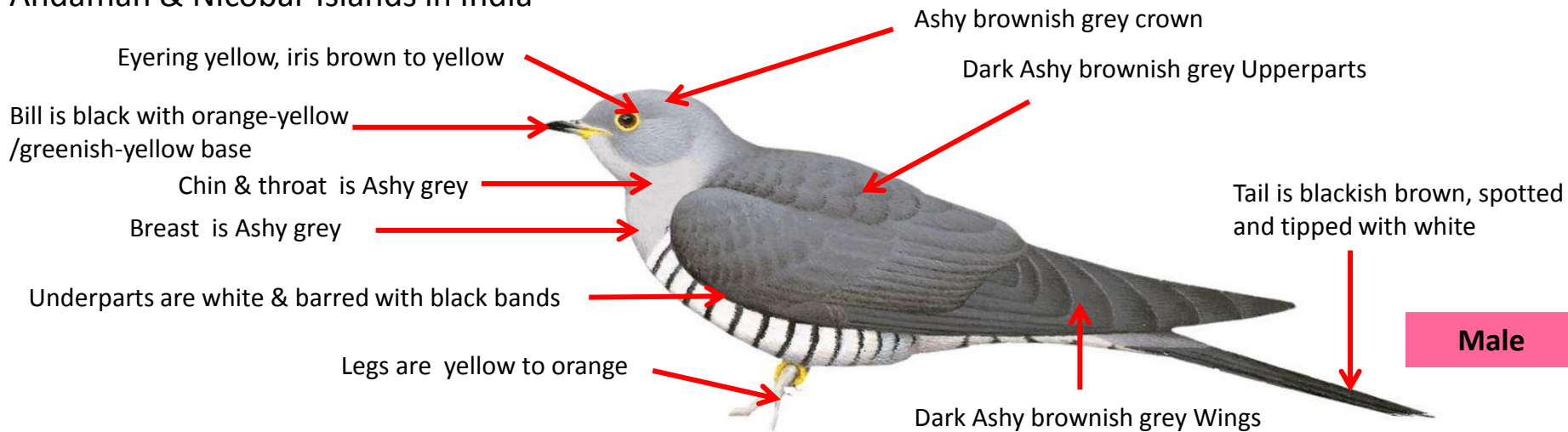
Difference from Male

Important id point

Reference : Birds of Indian Subcontinent  
Inskipp and Grimmett  
[www.HBW.com](http://www.HBW.com)

# Himalayan Cuckoo Identification Tips

**Himalayan Cuckoo :*Cuculus saturatus*:** Breeds in Himalayas, & North East India, winter visitor in Andaman & Nicobar Islands in India



Difference from Male

Important id point

Reference : Birds of Indian Subcontinent  
Inskipp and Grimmett  
[www.HBW.com](http://www.HBW.com)

# Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo Identification Tips

**Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo : *Hierococcyx fugax***: Resident in Eastern Himalayas & hills of North east India

Eye-ring yellow, Iris is brown /orange-brown /dirty white

Bill is yellow with black tip /greenish / black

Slate-grey crown

White moustache and supraloral area

Chin & throat is White

Breast is White & streaked brown & Rufous

Slate-grey Upperparts

Brownish grey Wings

Crown is black with buff feather tips

Underparts are white & streaked with rufous and brown

Legs are yellow

Tail is banded grey and black with broad black subterminal bar and rufous and white tip

Dark grey upperparts barred rufous

Both the sexes Similar

Underparts are white with rufous-edged dark brown spots or streaks

Immature

Difference from Adult

Important id point

Reference : Birds of Indian Subcontinent  
Inskipp and Grimmett  
[www.HBW.com](http://www.HBW.com)

# Indian Cuckoo Identification Tips

**Indian Cuckoo : *Cuculus micropterus*:** Breeds in East , Central, Gangetic plains; Resident of Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu ,Kerala & Andaman & Nicobar Islands

Eyering grey to yellow, iris brown

Slaty grey crown

Bill is black above, greenish with yellow base below

Chin & throat is Ashy grey

Breast is Ashy grey

Bill is black with yellow base

Slate-grey tinged brownish Upperparts

Tail blackish barred white at sides and with broad black subterminal band

Cheek are rufous

Rufous neck with barring

Chin & throat are rufous

Upper breast is rufous with faint barring

Male

Legs are yellow

Dark Ashy brownish grey Wings

Female

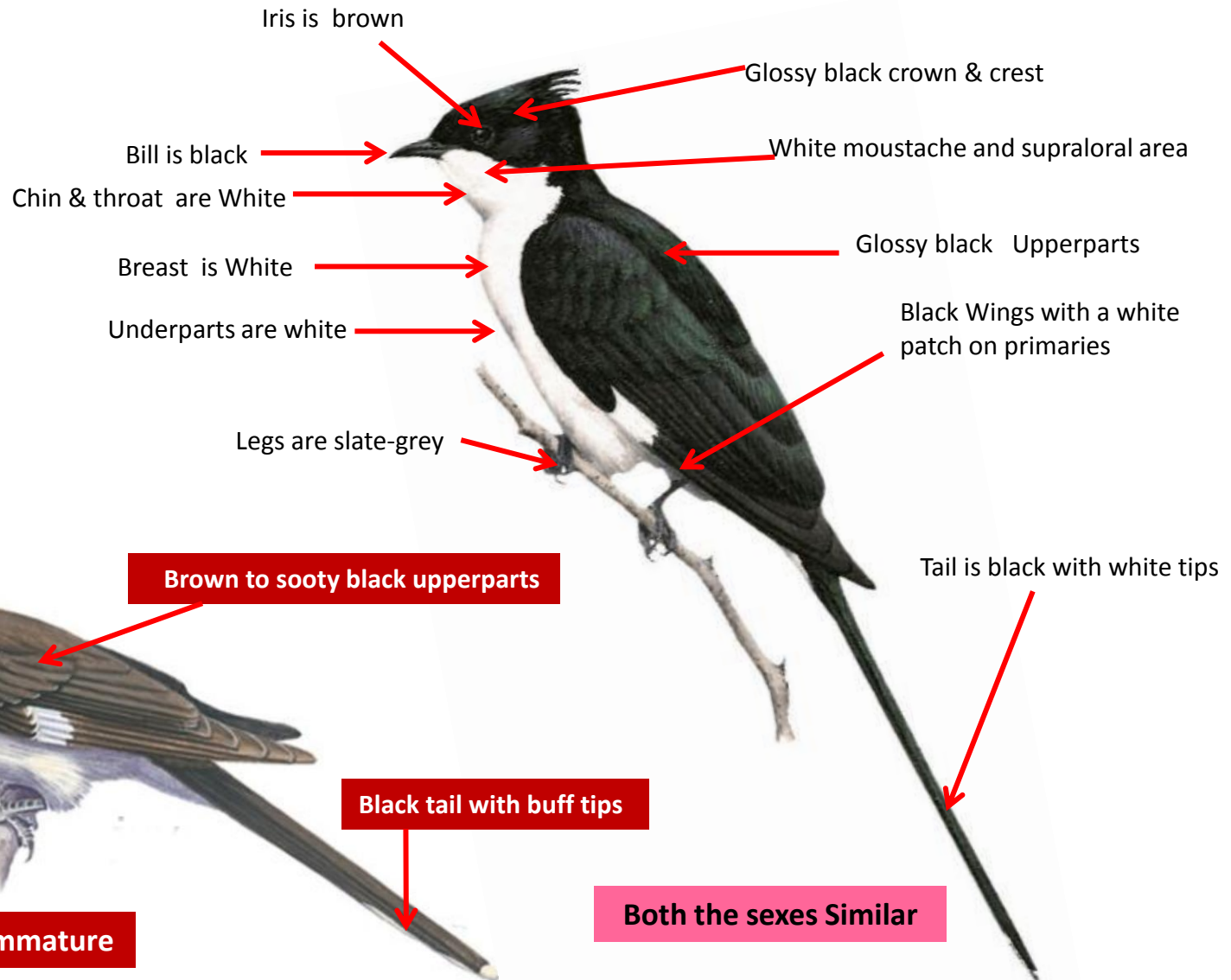
Difference from Male

Important id point



# Jacobin's Cuckoo ( Pied Cuckoo) Identification Tips

Jacobin's Cuckoo ( Pied Cuckoo) : *Clamator jacobinus* :Widespread Resident in India



Crown is Brown to sooty black

Brown to sooty black upperparts

Fulvous or grey on breast

Underparts are white

Immature

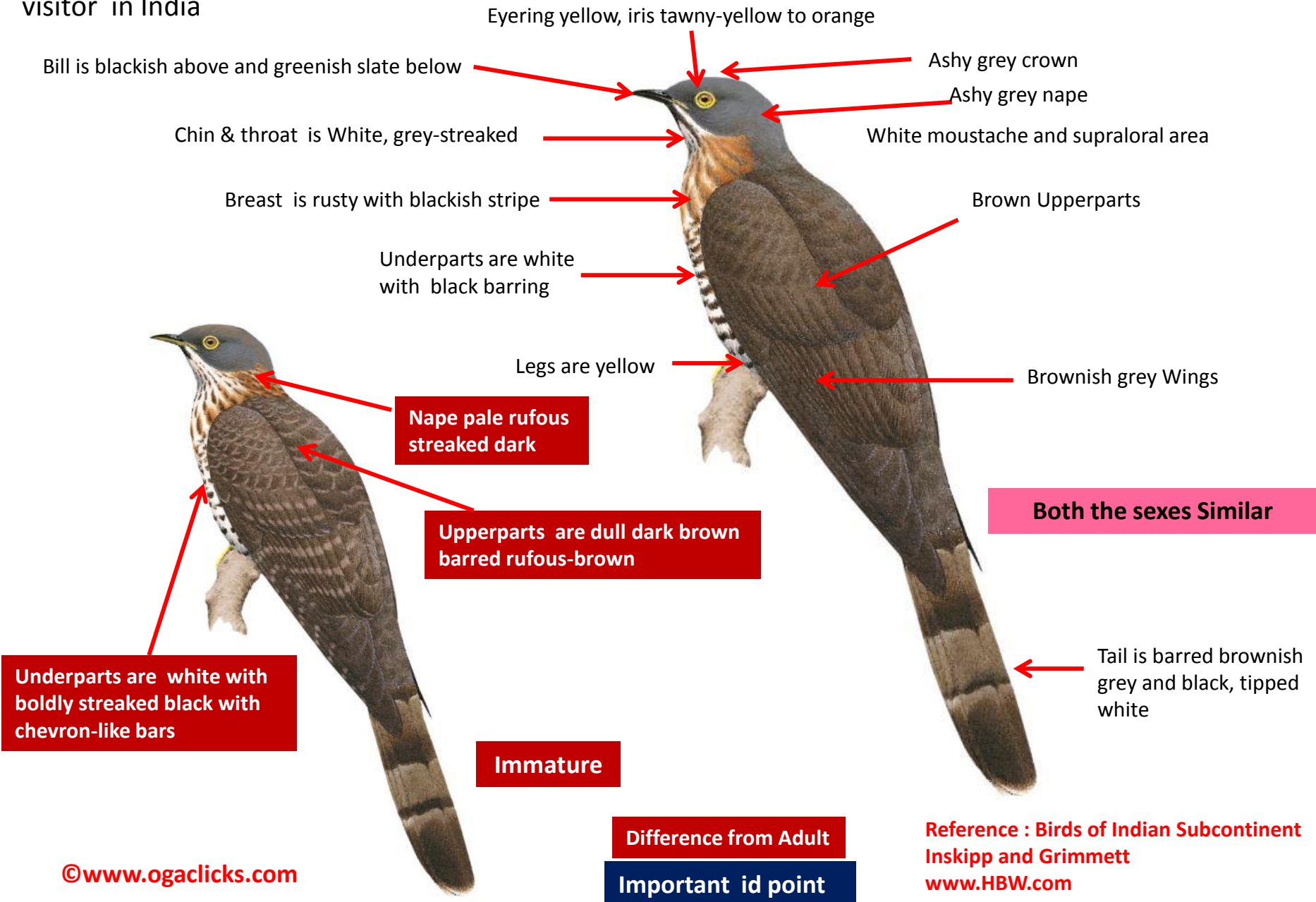
Black tail with buff tips

Difference from Adult

Important id point

# Large Hawk Cuckoo Identification Tips

**Large Hawk Cuckoo : *Hierococcyx sparverioides*:** Breeds in Himalayas & North East India, Scattered winter visitor in India



## Lesser Cuckoo Identification Tips

**Lesser Cuckoo : *Cuculus poliocephalus*** : Breeds in Himalayas, & North East India, Passage migrant in peninsular India

Eyering yellow, iris brown to yellow

Ashy grey crown

Slate grey Upperparts

Bill is black with yellow base

Chin & throat is light grey

Breast is light grey

Dark Ashy brownish grey Wings

Tail is blackish with white tip and white spots at sides

Underparts are white & barred with black bands

Legs are yellow to orange

**Male**



Breast with a rufous wash

**Female**

Rufous crown barred black

White Throat & breast  
barred black

Underparts white barred black

Rufous Wings with Black bars  
& black edges

Rufous Upperparts barred rufous and black

Rufous uppertail covert & rump ( plain)

Tail is rufous, barred  
black, tipped white

**Female ( Hepatic Morph)**

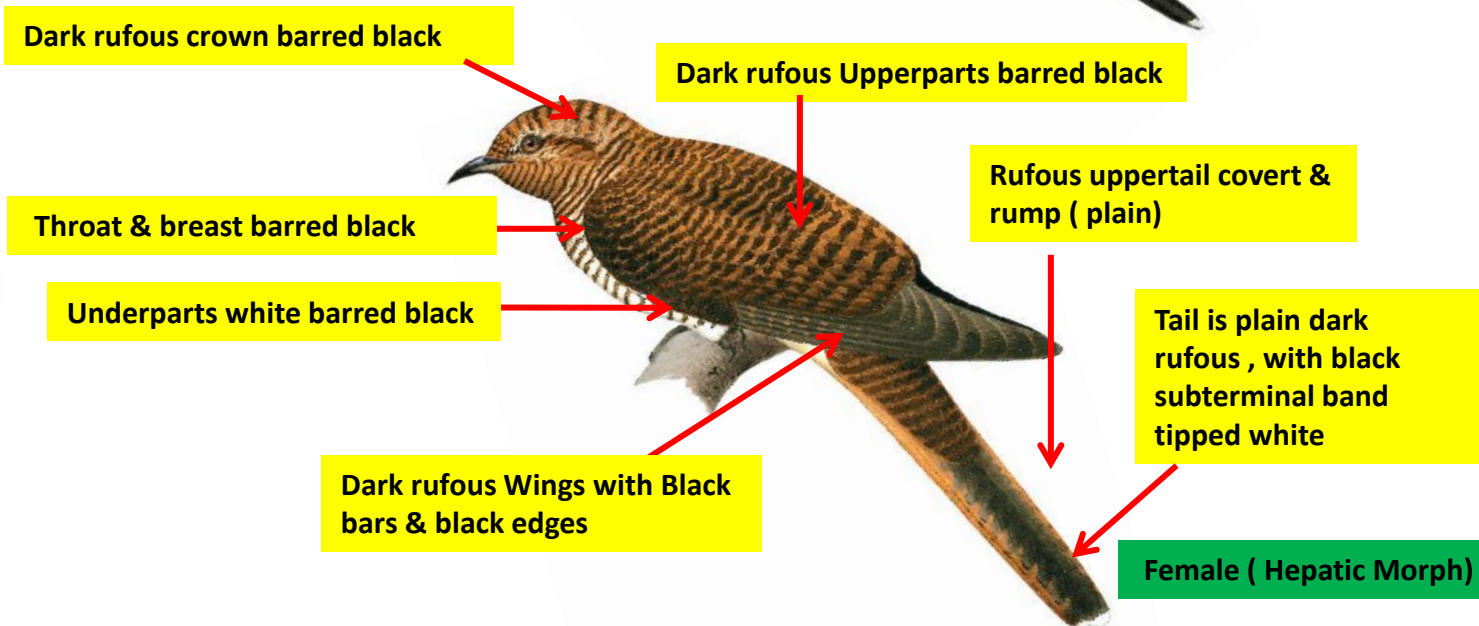
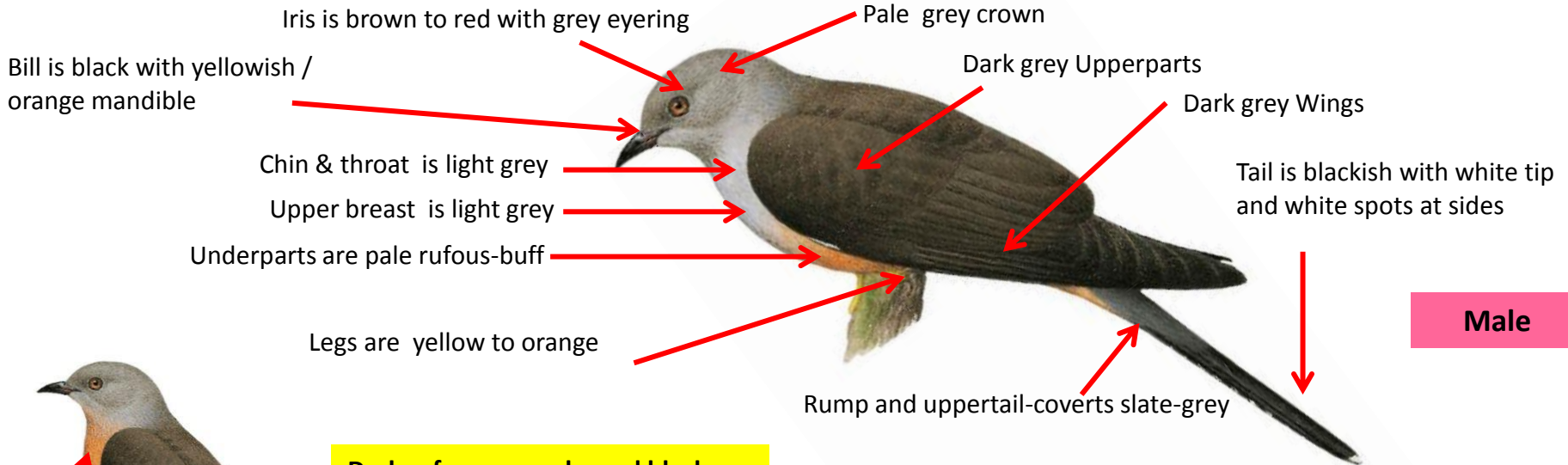
Difference from Male

**Important id point**

Reference : Birds of Indian Subcontinent  
Inskipp and Grimmett  
[www.HBW.com](http://www.HBW.com)

# Plaintive Cuckoo Identification Tips

**Plaintive Cuckoo: *Cacomantis merulinus*:** Resident of North East India



Difference from Male

Important id point



# Violet Cuckoo Identification Tips

**Violet Cuckoo : *Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus*:** Resident of hills of North East India

Eye-ring red, iris red to brown

Glossy violet crown

Bill is yellow with orange-red base

Glossy violet Upperparts

Chin & throat is glossy violet

Glossy Violet Wings

Breast is glossy violet

Belly is white with broad black/ violet /green bars

Dark brown Crown

Bill is brown with yellow base

Dark brown nape

Tail is blackish with white tip, outer feathers barred

Legs are olive-green

Whiten face with black barring

Upperparts are greenish bronze

Wings are greenish bronze

Male

Underparts whitish with bronze-green bars and variably washed rufous

Central tail greenish, outer tail rufous with greenish bars

Female

Difference from Male

Important id point

## Genus Cuculus Comparison

Himalayan Cuckoo



Eyering yellow, iris light brown to orange

Eurasian Cuckoo



Indian Cuckoo



Lesser Cuckoo



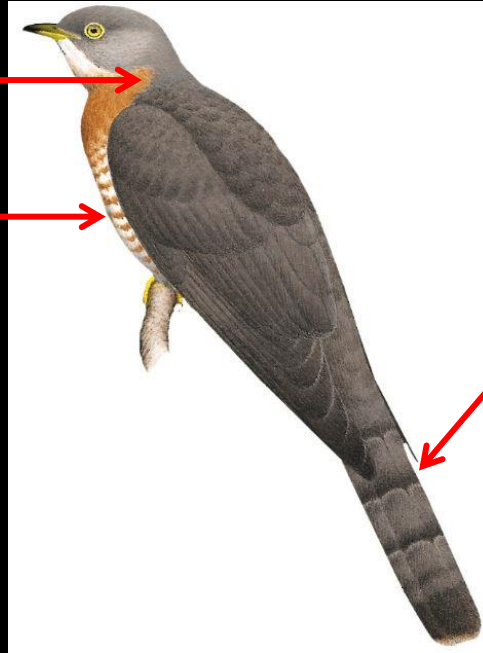
Tail blackish barred white at sides and with broad black subterminal band

# Hawk cuckoo's Comparison- Adult

## Common Hawk Cuckoo

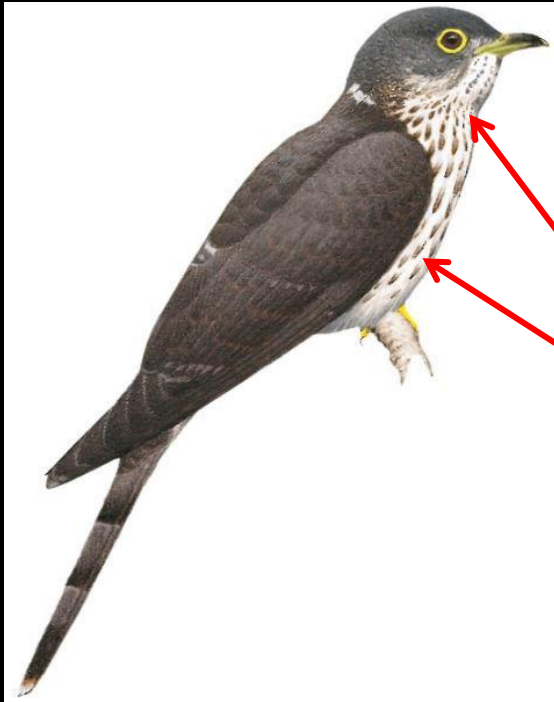
Breast is rufous

Underparts are white & barred with rufous bands



Tail is ashy brownish grey with Black Bands ( 3-5)

## Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo



Chin & throat is White

Breast is White & streaked brown & Rufous

Tail is barred brownish grey and black, tipped white

## Large Hawk Cuckoo

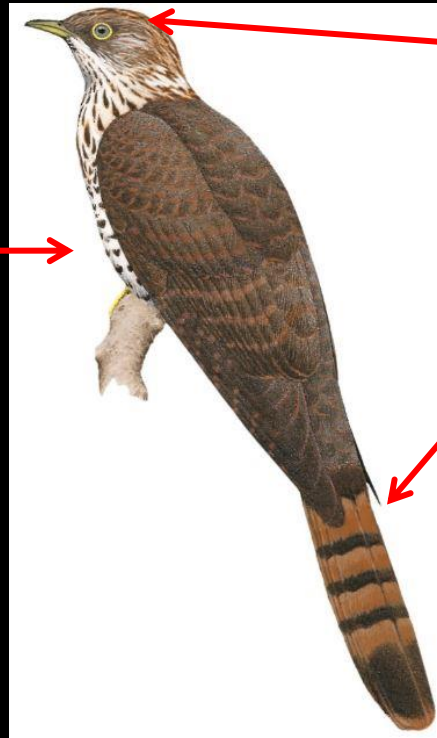


Chin & throat is White, grey-streaked

Breast is rusty with blackish stripe

## Hawk cuckoo's Comparison- Immature

**Common Hawk Cuckoo**



Barred dull rufous head

Underparts brown-streaked buffy-white

Tail is rufous ,barred black

**Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo**



Underparts are white with rufous-edged dark brown spots or streaks

Dark grey upperparts barred rufous

Tail is barred brownish grey and black, tipped white

**Large Hawk Cuckoo**



Grey head

Nape pale rufous streaked dark

Underparts are white with boldly streaked black with chevron-like bars