

RELATIVE LENGTHS OF PRIMARIES

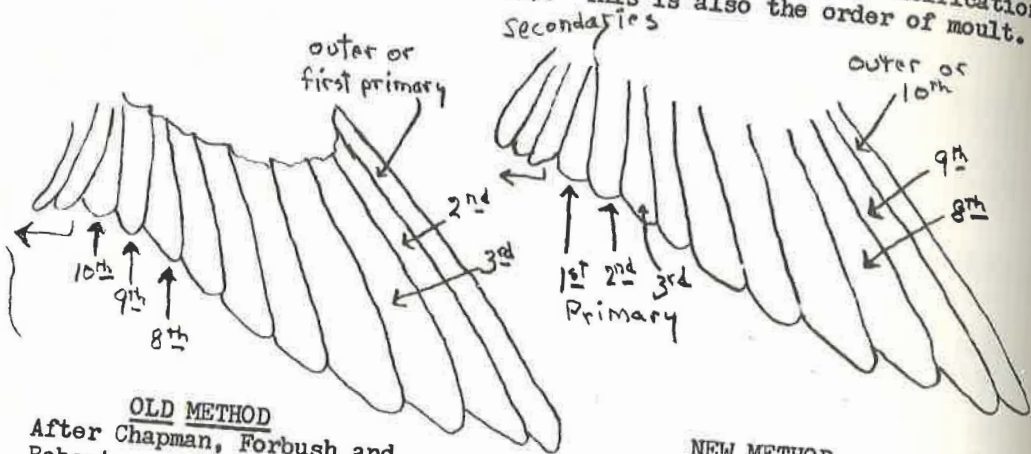
By Charles H. Blake
(Reprinted from the Workshop Manual, Vol. I, 1962)

Older textbooks, as well as current material, refer to relative lengths of primaries. This can be important in identifying some species. It is important to note the different numbering methods used.

Old method: Used by Chapman, Forbush and Roberts, etc. These authors all count the outer primary as the first and count in from there.

Reason for change: In some species the outer primary is only rudimentary. This can lead to errors.

New method: In this method the first primary is the one next to the secondaries and the others are counted out toward the outer primary. This method is used in the Bird-Banding Manual, section on Identification, Connecticut Warbler (BBM-G-A.O.U.678). This is also the order of moult.

OLD METHOD

After Chapman, Forbush and Roberts, etc.

NEW METHOD

After Bird Banding Manual (BBM-G-A.O.U. 678) and material on Flycatchers, Thrushes and Vireos appearing elsewhere by same author.

How many primaries: In the current AOU Checklist most families of perching birds up to Sturnidae are all 10-primaried. The vireos are intermediate. The tenth primary is minute in Red-eyed, Yellow-throated, Blue-headed Vireos and their close relatives. The 9-primaried families are all those after the vireos and three odd cases: Horned Larks, Swallows and Pipits.

