

Great Reed Warbler

Regno: fauna

Birds

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Great Reed Warbler - *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

The largest of the European reed passerines. It can be distinguished by its size, its slender outline and its colour tending to tawny on the upper parts.

Less shy than the other species, the Great Reed Warbler has a surprisingly loud song, a prolonged phrasing, rich in croaky and shrill notes, which it usually performs at the top of a cane holding its bill upwards and with the feathers of its head ruffled. Its nests in reed thickets in marshes, lakes and along river banks.

The cup-shaped nest is fixed to the canes and inside can be about 15 centimetres deep.

A long-range migrant, the males arrive at the European nesting grounds in April, before the females, and fight among themselves for the best territories. In turn, the females try to get the males with the best positions.

Rather than make do with males in less favourable positions, some females which arrive late establish themselves in the best territories and assume the role of "satellite females" (they pair with the male, but build the nest and bring up their young by themselves). It leaves for tropical Africa in August.

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