

Pipit groups by size - *The rule of thumb*

The four pipit groups used throughout this book are based on size ('Large pipits', 'Small pipits' & 'Diminutive pipits') or colour ('Yellow pipits'). The former three groups differ markedly in total body length (although there is some overlap between size extremes) as measured from the tip of the bill to the tip of the tail of an outstretched specimen. The diagram shown here relates the sizes of these three groups to the left hand of an adult man. All pipits exhibit sexual size dimorphism with males slightly larger than females but in many cases there is some overlap in the extremes of the sexes, with particularly big females being slightly larger than unusually small males. With experience the size differences between the various groups will become second nature. See also Fig. 41 on page 81.

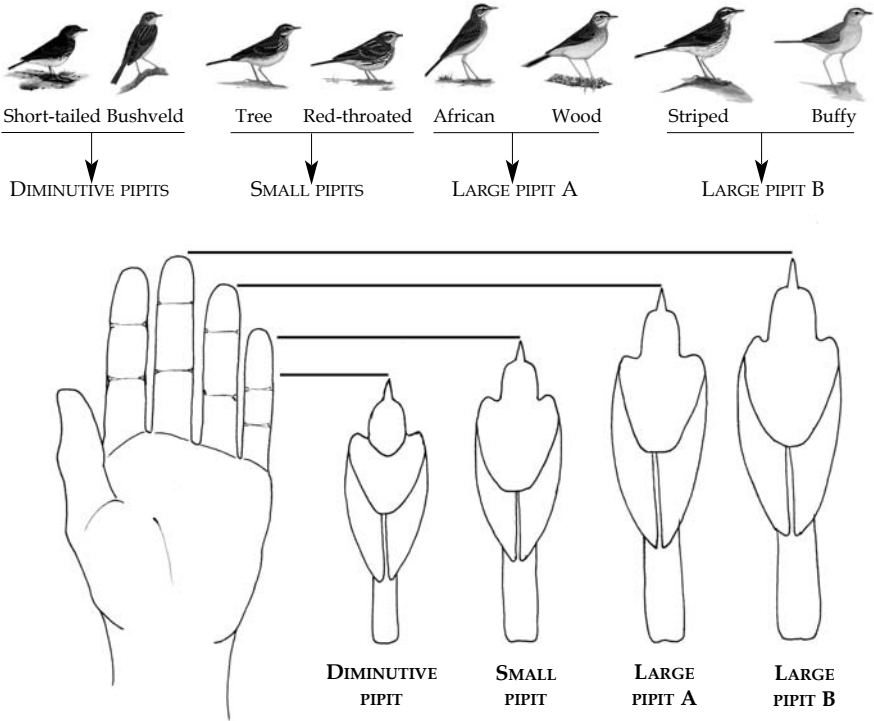


Fig. 44. Pipit sizes - the rule of thumb. Three groups of pipits are pictured in relation to the left hand of an adult man (18cm from the crease of the wrist to the tip of the middle finger). The 'Diminutive pipits' reach to the area between the first and second creases of the little finger with an average length of 12-14cm. The 'Small pipits' more or less reach the tip of the little finger with an average length of approximately 15cm. Two species of 'Large pipits' are shown – the smaller bird is an African Pipit (length 16-17cm) and the larger is a Buffy Pipit (length 16-18cm). The former more or less reaches the tip of the ring finger, while the latter is approximately equal to the total length of the outstretched hand. Note that the two 'Yellow Pipits' are not displayed, but both are similar in size to a small 'Large pipit'.