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BIOLOGY


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BRITISH OOLOGY;  
BEING  
ILLUSTRATIONS  
OF THE  
EGGS OF BRITISH BIRDS,  
WITH FIGURES OF EACH SPECIES,  
AS FAR AS PRACTICABLE,  
DRAWN AND COLOURED FROM NATURE :  
ACCOMPANIED BY  
DESCRIPTIONS OF THE MATERIALS AND SITUATION OF THEIR NESTS,  
NUMBER OF EGGS, &C.

BY WILLIAM C. HEWITSON.

---

VOL. II.

---

“ Among the roots  
Of hazel, pendant o'er the plaintive stream,  
They frame the first foundation of their domes,  
Dry sprigs of trees, in artful fabric laid,  
And bound with clay together. Now 'tis nought  
But restless hurry through the busy air,  
Beat by unnumber'd wings.”

---

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE :

PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR,  
BY CURRIE AND BOWMAN, 32, COLLINGWOOD STREET.

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Oology

TO  
WILLIAM YARRELL, ESQ., F. L. S.,  
&c. &c.,  
THE ARDENT AND SUCCESSFUL PROMOTER  
OF THIS  
AS OF OTHER BRANCHES OF NATURAL HISTORY,  
THIS VOLUME OF BRITISH OOOLOGY  
IS DEDICATED,  
AS  
A MARK OF THE ESTEEM  
OF THE AUTHOR.



SYSTEMATIC INDEX.

VOL. II.

ORDER III.—RASORES, OR FOWLS.

*FAMILY, COLUMBIDÆ.*

Eggs two.

<i>No. of Plate.</i>	<i>Nomenclature used in British Oology.</i>	
XVIII.	{ Columba palumbus	
		——— livia
XL.		——— œnas
		——— turtur.

*FAMILY, PAVONIDÆ.*

Eggs numerous.

XXXIII.	Phasianus Colchicus
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*FAMILY, TETRAONIDÆ.*

LXXXIV.	Perdix cinerea	
LXXXV.	——— rufa	
XXIX.	——— coternix	
LIV.	{ Tetrao urogallus	
		——— tetrix
XCIII.		——— scoticus
CXLI.		——— lagopus

*FAMILY, STRUTHIONIDÆ.*

Eggs two.

LXXXVIII.	Otis tarda
CXXX.	——— tetrax

## ORDER IV.—GRALLATORES, OR WADING BIRDS.

## FAMILY, ARDEADÆ.

Eggs, three or four.

<i>No. of Plate.</i>	<i>Nomenclature used in British Oology.</i>	<i>Nomenclature to be substituted.</i>
CXIX.	{ Ardea purpurea ———nycticorax ———cinerea	
CIX.		{ Botaurus stellaris ——— minutus
CXXI.		
C.	Platalea leucorodia	

## FAMILY, RALLIDÆ.

Eggs, from seven to ten in number.

LXXVII.	{ Rallus aquaticus Gallinula crex ——— porzana ——— Baillonii ——— chloropus
CXXXVIII.	
XXXI.	
V.	

## FAMILY, SCOLOPACIDÆ.

Eggs usually much pointed at one end; always four in number.

XXXVIII.	Hæmatopus ostralegus	
XCVIII.	Numenius arquata	
LXIV.	——— phæopus	
XXXV.	Totanus calidris	
CL.	——— glareola	
XII.	Tringa hypoleucos	Totanus hypoleucos
CXXXI.	——— macularia	Totanus macularius
CXLIV.	Recurvirostra avocetta	
CXX.	Limosa melanura	

LII.	Scolopax rusticola
CLIII.	——— major
XXXII.	——— gallinago
CXXIV.	Machetes pugnax
LXXIII.	Tringa variabilis
CIV.	{ Phalaropus hyperboreus ——— lobatus
LIII.	

## FAMILY, CHARADRIADÆ.

Eggs much pointed at one end; always four in number.

No. of Plate.      Nomenclature used in British Oology.      Nomenclature to be substituted.

I.		Vanellus cristatus
XLVI.		Charadrius pluvialis
CXLIII.		———— morinellus
XXVIII.		———— hyaticula
CLII.	}	———— minor
		———— cantianus

Eggs two in number.

LXVII.	Ædicnemus crepitans
--------	---------------------

## ORDER V.—NATATOIRES, OR SWIMMING BIRDS.

## FAMILY, ANATIDÆ.

Eggs for the most part numerous.—Spotless.

CXXIX.	}	Cygnus ferus	
		———— Bewickii	
CXXVII.	}	Anser palustris	
		———— ferus	
CXLII.	}	———— brenta	
		Anas acuta	Dafila acuta
XXIII.	}	———— boschas	
		———— crecca	Querquedula crecca
CXXIII.	}	———— querquedula	———— circia
		———— strepera	Chauliodus strepera
XCIV.	}	———— clypeata	Spathulea clypeata
		———— penelope	Mareca penelope
LX.	}	———— glacialis	Hareldra glacialis
		———— clangula	Clangula vulgaris
CI.	}	———— histrionica	———— histrionica
		———— spectabilis	Somateria spectabilis
XV.	}	———— mollissima	———— mollissima
		———— ferina	Fuligula ferina
CLI.	}	———— marila	———— marila
		———— cristata	———— cristata
LXIII.		Tadorna vulpanser	
CLV.		Mergus merganser	
LXI.		———— serrator	

## FAMILY, COLYMBIDÆ.

Eggs from three to five in number.—Spotless.

XCII.	}	Podiceps minor
		———— cristatus
	}	———— cornutus
		———— rubricollis
CVI.	}	———— auritus
		———— auritus

Eggs always two in number.

<i>No. of Plate.</i>	<i>Nomenclature used in British Oology.</i>	<i>Nomenclature to be substituted.</i>
LXXX.	Colymbus glacialis	
LXXXIII.	{ ——— arcticus	
	{ ——— septentrionalis	

*FAMILY, ALCADÆ.*

Eggs one, rarely two, in number.

L.	Uria troile
XXXVI.	—— grille
LXXXV.	Alca torda
CXLV.	{ ——— impennis
	{ Mergulus melanoleucos
XLVII.	Mormon fratercula

*FAMILY, PELECANIDÆ.*

Eggs four or five in number.

XXXIV.	Sula Bassana
LXXXIV.	{ Carbo cormoranus
	{ ——— graculus

*FAMILY, LARIDÆ.*

Eggs two or three in number.

CXXV.	Sterna Caspia
IV.	—— cantiaca
CHL.	—— hirundo
LXVI.	—— Dougalii
XIX.	—— arctica
XXV.	—— minuta
XLVIII.	—— nigra
CII.	Larus ridibundus
LVII.	—— canus
LXXXIX.	—— rissa
CXLVIII.	—— glaucus
LXXXIX.	—— argentatus
XCIX.	—— marinus
XVII.	—— fuscus
LVI.	Lestris cataractes
LI.	—— Richardsonii

One Egg only.

XXXVII.	{ Procellaria glacialis	
	{ ——— pelagica	Thalassidroma pelagica
XXXIX.	{ ——— puffinus	Puffinus anglorum



VOL. II

*Index to the English Names of Birds, in the order in which they are arranged.*

PLATE.	PLATE.	PLATE.
18 Wood Pigeon	32 Common Snipe	92 Horned Grebe
-- Rock Pigeon	124 Ruff	106 Red-necked Grebe
40 Stock Dove	73 Dunlin	-- Eared Grebe
-- Turtle Dove	104 Red-necked Phalarope	80 Great Northern Diver
33 Pheasant	-- Grey Phalarope	83 Black-throated Diver
84 Common Partridge	53 Turnstone	-- Red-throated Diver
85 Red-legged Partridge	1 Peewit	50 Common Guillemot
29 Quail	46 Golden Plover	36 Black Guillemot
54 Wood Grouse	143 Dotterel	75 Razor-bill
-- Black Grouse	28 Ring Dotterel	145 Great Auk
93 Red Grouse	152 Kentish Plover	-- Little Auk
141 Ptarmigan	-- Little Ring Dotterel	47 Puffin
88 Bustard	67 Norfolk Plover	34 Solan Goose
130 Little Bustard	129 Bewick's Swan	74 Cormorant
119 Crested Purple Heron	-- Common Wild Swan	-- Shag
-- Night Heron	127 Grey Lag Wild Goose	125 Caspian Tern
-- Common Heron	-- Bean Goose	4 Sandwich Tern
109 Common Bittern	142 Brent Goose	103 Common Tern
-- Little Bittern	-- Pintail Duck	66 Roseate Tern
121 White Stork	23 Common Wild Duck	19 Arctic Tern
100 Spoonbill	-- Teal	25 Lesser Tern
77 Corncrake	123 Garganey Duck	48 Black Tern
-- Water Rail	-- Gadwell	102 Black-headed Gull
-- Spotted Gallinule	94 Shoveller	57 Common Gull
138 Baillon's Crake	-- Wigeon	89 Kittiwake
31 Water Hen	60 Golden-eye Duck	148 Glaucous Gull
5 Coot	-- Long-tailed Duck	79 Herring Gull
38 Oyster Catcher	101 Harlequin Duck	99 Great Black-backed Gull
98 Common Curlew	-- King Duck	17 Lesser Black-backed Gull
64 Whimbrel	15 Eider Duck	56 Skua Gull
35 Redshank	151 Pochard	51 Richardson's Arctic Gull
150 Wood Sandpiper	-- Scaup Duck	37 Fulmar
12 Common Sandpiper	-- Tufted Duck	-- Stormy Petrel
131 Spotted Sandpiper	43 Shieldrake	39 Shearwater Petrel
144 Avocet	155 Goosander [ser	
120 Black-tailed Godwit	61 Red-breasted Merganser	
52 Woodcock	92 Little Grebe	
153 Great Snipe	-- Great Crested Grebe	







1



2

## XVIII.

### COLUMBA PALUMBUS. (LINN.)

#### WOOD PIGEON, CUSHAT, RING DOVE.

---

THE Wood Pigeon begins to build early in April, and is then dispersed throughout the country, breeding in almost every wood and plantation, and, though it retains much of that shyness which characterises it when in flocks during the winter, and does not usually allow you to come near it on the nest, yet it is sometimes far more familiar, building in pleasure grounds in the immediate vicinity of the house. At Seaton Burn, near Newcastle, these welcome and delightful visitors may be seen from the windows whilst sitting on their eggs; and, in one instance, I observed one which had fixed its abode in a lone thorn bush, within about ten yards of the gardener's cottage, where children were playing all day; and, what is still more remarkable, a pair reared their young ones, during the last summer, in ivy against the house, close under one of the lodging-room windows.

It builds a nest so slight, that it is a matter of surprise that it is not blown out of the tree, or the eggs out of it; it is formed of dry sticks, crossing each other, and without any cement or lining whatever, it has very little the appearance of a bird's nest, being nearly level, and having very little concavity, it is so loosely put together, and so slight, that I have in many instances seen the eggs through from below.

The Ring Dove seems to prefer the branches of the oak and fir, as being more horizontal and better suited to the flatness of its nest, which is found also in thorns and in ivy growing against trees. It has two or three broods in the year, and lays invariably two eggs, of a glossy white, and usually of a perfect oval. I have known young ones in the nest as late as the middle of September.—Plate XVIII., Figure 1.

COLUMBA LIVIA. (LINN.)

ROCK DOVE.

---

LESS is known of the Rock Pigeon than of any of the genus, its place of breeding being usually out of the reach of man, in inaccessible rocks overhanging the sea; a few of them, I am informed, breed in the cliffs at Flamborough-Head, and probably upon many parts of our coast; they are more abundant in Scotland, upon the Orkneys. The Rev. George Low, in his *Fauna Orcadensis* says, that "they are found round all the rocks of the main land and isles, where they build in the caves, but retire farther in than the Auks, Gulls, or most other sea-birds, except some of the Petrels." In the Western Islands, my friend, Mr. Geo. C. Atkinson, found several of the eggs upon the Isle of Harris, they were laid without any nest at the farthest extremity of caves and fissures in the rocks, the eggs (as is the case with the whole of this genus) were two in number, those which he brought home, and from which the plate is drawn, were less of an oval than the Wood Pigeon, this may not, however, be a distinction on which to rely.





2

*Drawn on Stone by P. Hervey*

*Printed by J. G. Smith*



XI.

COLUMBA ÆNAS. (LINN.)

Stock Dove.

---

THE Stock Dove, though rarely, if ever met with in the north of England, breeds in some of the southern counties ; it is not uncommon in Epping Forest, from whence my friend, Mr. Doubleday, has kindly supplied me with its eggs.

It, however, appears, to be rather confined, even in the south of England. White, though anxious to ascertain its mode of breeding, was unable to do so ; he was of opinion that our tame Pigeon had its origin from the Rock Pigeon, and only wanted the confirmation of the Stock Dove, building a nest in trees like the Ring Dove (as he expected), to render that opinion decisive. Although this has not proved to be the fact, as the Stock Dove lays its two white eggs in the cavities of decayed and pollard trees, and makes no nest ; yet I should be very much inclined to think with him, and to attribute its origin to the same source, as it frequently happens that our tame Pigeon, when kept near the sea-coast, will roam at large, and, returning to its native habits, will establish its place of nidification, and rear its young ones in cliffs overhanging the sea in like manner with the Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*).

In the Shetland Islands, where the latter abounds, breeding in the numerous spacious caverns into which the sea constantly washes, they have every appearance of being tame, and are so easily approached within gun-shot, that, until assured of the contrary, I considered them the inmates of some neighbouring dovecote. They approach quite close to the huts of the fishermen, to feed over the small cultivated patches of corn land ; and I have little doubt might, if encouraged and fed, be readily domesticated.—Fig. 1 of Plate XL.

COLUMBA TURTUR. (LINN.)

TURTLE DOVE.

LIKE the last described species, the Turtle Dove breeds only in the more southern parts of the island, and is scarcely ever seen in the north, and then only in the winter months. I have met with it during the breeding season in Suffolk, and have received the eggs from Epping Forest. It builds a nest like the Ring Dove, of sticks, placed cross-wise, and forming a very loosely constructed platform, upon which it lays two white eggs, differing only in size from the other three species.—Fig. 2.



XXXIII.



### XXXIII.

#### PHASIANUS COLCHICUS. (LINN.)

##### PHEASANT.

---

THE Pheasant is too well known to need much description ; it breeds in May and June throughout the country, and lays its eggs upon the ground in woods and plantations, amongst the underwood, under the cut branches of trees, and in the long grass, sometimes, also, in hedge rows, and occasionally in the open fields ; they are from ten to fourteen in number, nearly round, and differing only in the intensity of their colouring. From the near approach of the Pheasant to domestication, the eggs are subject to the strange and whimsical forms seen in those of the common fowls. I possess some very remarkable deformities of this kind, obligingly sent me by the Honourable Mrs. Liddell, one, in particular, which is cylindrical, about two inches and a half long, and one inch and a half in diameter.







Drawn by W. H. Hens

Day & Hagne lith<sup>d</sup> to the King



## PERDIX CINEREA. (LINN.)

COMMON PARTRIDGE.

---

THE Partridge is everywhere more or less frequent ; a few covies spreading themselves occasionally over our heathy uncultivated moors.

They lay their eggs either upon the bare ground, or upon a few pieces of dry grass, carelessly scraped together ; they are deposited in open pastures, meadows, or corn fields, under the shelter of whins or other brushwood, amongst newly-planted trees, or at the bottom of a thorn hedge. The eggs are numerous, varying from 10 or 12 to 18 or 20 in number : they differ from the light drab of Fig. 2 to the deeper reddish brown of Fig. 1 ; an intermediate variety being the most frequent. The assiduous perseverance of the Partridge during incubation is well known ; numbers of instances might be given, none, perhaps, more striking than that mentioned by Montague, of one which allowed itself and eggs to be deposited in a hat, and thus carried unresistingly into captivity, where it continued to sit them till the young ones were brought out.





LXXXV



Illustration of a fossil of *H. H. H.*

Day & Maguire, *Am. Mus. Nat. Hist.*

## PERDIX RUFA. (RAY.)

RED LEGGED PARTRIDGE, GUERNSEY OR FRENCH PARTRIDGE.

---

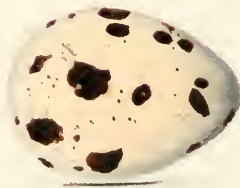
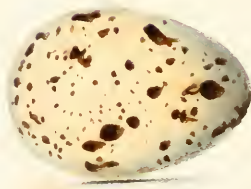
As the Red Legged Partridge is merely a native of this country by adoption, and without the long claim of naturalization of the Pheasant, the eggs of which have been already figured, I have had some hesitation in giving its egg a place in the present work. It is now, however, very plentiful in various parts of the country, and becoming daily more so, and will, probably, in a few years, spread itself over the greater part of England. In Oxfordshire, Mr. Daniel informs us that it is abundant, the Marquis of Hertford having introduced it by bringing over from the Continent many thousand eggs, which were reared under hens, and their produce turned at large. It is also abundant in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk. Upon the estates of Sir Thomas Gooch, Bart. (to whose kindness I owe the pleasure), I have seen several covies during a day's shooting. They are much wilder than the Common Partridge, and run for a considerable distance before they will rise; they are also a stronger, heavier bird, and some fear was entertained by the gamekeepers, that they would destroy the natives of the soil, means are in consequence taken upon some of the estates to destroy them in return; they are not considered so good to eat, and are apt to spoil the dogs by keeping them at a running point. The eggs in the plate are selected to show the two extremes of colour to which they are liable; the light ones, with a medium shade between the two, are most frequent; the deep colouring of Fig. 2, is rare.

The Red-legged Partridge makes more of a nest than the common species, and somewhat elevated above the ground: it is of dry grass mixed with a few of the feathers of the

bird. The usual number of eggs is from ten to twelve. J. D. Salmon, Esq. (to whom I am again obliged for a fine series of eggs, and information), tells me that "he has this season seen a nest containing eighteen eggs—an unusual number." Temminck says, that they lay from fifteen to eighteen.

Mr. Salmon says, that from the wilder nature of this bird it seems to prefer the heathy districts to those that are under cultivation; if this is the case, and it would thrive upon the extensive moors of the North of England, it would there form a beautiful additional tenant of the soil. It would, at all events, be very well worth the trouble of trying to introduce it.







## XXIX.

## PERDIX COTURNIX. (LATH.)

QUAIL.  

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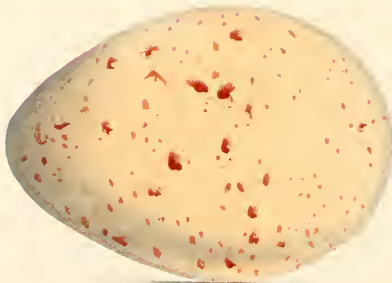
THE Quail is rather a rare bird in the north of England, a single pair only occurring occasionally during the breeding season: they are then, however, not likely to be disturbed, being concealed amongst the corn and long grass, and are probably more numerous than is supposed: they lay their eggs upon the ground in meadows and corn-fields, having first collected together a small quantity of dry grass; these vary very much in number, being from six to fourteen, though most commonly about ten: they differ greatly in colour and markings; those drawn on the Plate are the most striking varieties, though there are many intermediate ones: the first figure is more common than the second, the third less frequent than either.







1



2

## TETRAO UROGALLUS. (LINN.)

WOOD GROUSE, COCK OF THE WOOD, CAPERCALZE.

---

THIS fine bird, which has been for some time extinct in our own country, breeds in the mountainous pine forests of the north of Europe, in Russia, Sweden, and Norway. In the last mentioned country it is, however, so rare, that it was with the greatest difficulty that we could procure specimens of its eggs; and, although wandering for many days through those parts which were far from human habitation, and where we were told it was most abundant, we had, in two instances only, the satisfaction of seeing it alive. In these remote situations it lays its eggs, under the shelter of a young spruce fir, in those parts of the forest which are clear of the larger timber; they are eight or ten in number, and are deposited upon a small quantity of dry grass towards the end of June. Several of these birds have, for some years, been brought over to Scotland by Lord Fyfe, in order to try to establish them in his extensive woods. After many failures, he succeeded during the summer of 1832, in rearing some young ones, which were to be turned at large. Of the success of this interesting experiment, I have not heard, but sincerely hope that it may succeed.—Fig. 1 represents the egg, which varies only in the size of the spots.

TETRAO TETRIX. (LINN.)

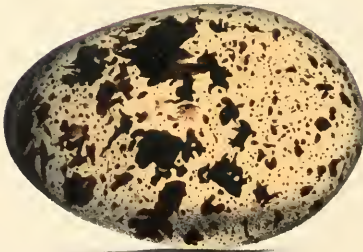
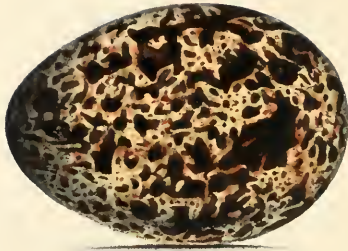
BLACK GROUS.

---

THE Black Grouse, the egg of which, a variety, with the spots unusually large, is represented at Fig. 2 of the accompanying Plate, breeds abundantly in various parts, especially the north of England, and in Scotland; it makes its nest sometimes amongst the heath, at other times in young plantations, and lays from eight to ten eggs. Various experiments have been tried to introduce the Black Game into districts where they were not naturally met with, many of them without success, and in situations which appear in every way favourable, and similar to those where they are in great abundance.



ΔCIII





### XCIH.

#### TETRAO SCOTICUS. (LATH.)

##### RED GROUSE, MOOR GAME.

---

The eggs of the grouse, in depth and richness of colouring, are unrivalled by those of any other British bird, and occupy in consequence a prominent place in our cabinets, to which they are a beautiful ornament. The Red Grouse, which has hitherto been met with only on the British Islands, breeds on most of the high heathy moors of this country, especially in the North of England, and the Highlands of Scotland: it is abundant, too, on most of the Western Islands, and is met with sparingly, I believe, also in Orkney; but, what is singular, has never been seen in Shetland, though at so short a distance. It begins to breed early in April, and makes its nest (when any) in a tuft of heather, gathering together a few pieces of heath and some dry grass. The eggs are from eight to twelve in number, and present many beautiful and strongly contrasted varieties: this is peculiarly striking in eggs of the same laying, those represented at Figs. 1 and 2 having been taken from the same nest.

The Grouse continue together in broods during the Autumn and Winter months, and seem to be strongly attached to each other. I have seen them (at a time when they were wild and difficult to obtain) closely pursued by the sportsman; and, though running at a short distance, with outstretched necks and on the alert, and when I have expected them to rise every moment, yet delay their flight, unwilling to leave some straggler, till they have allowed themselves to be approached within gun-shot.

Fig. 1 represents the most common variety; Fig. 2 occurs not unfrequently; Fig. 3 much less so.





Case



CXLI.

TETRAO LAGOPUS. (LINN.)

PTARMIGAN.

---

ALTHOUGH the Ptarmigan breeds in various parts of Scotland, the eggs are very difficult to obtain.

Its breeding places are those bare stony spots which cover a portion of most of the higher mountain ridges, amongst which it finds secure retreat; its similarity of colouring is so great, and its heedlessness of danger is such, (remaining closely crouched till you approach within the shortest distance,) that it is by no means easy to discover it.

The eggs are deposited either upon the bare ground, or upon a portion of dry grass or heath; they are ten or twelve, and (as far as I have had a chance of seeing them) exactly similar to the commonest variety of those of the Red Grouse.

The egg figured was one of a nest of ten, brought from Iceland, by Mr. J. C. Atkinson, of Newcastle.





LXXXVIII.



Drawn and etched by W. C. Hewitt

Day & Hoopes Lith'g Co. New York



LXXXVIII.

OTIS TARDA. (LINN.)

BUSTARD.

---

THIS fine bird, which the gun or the spread of cultivation have either destroyed or driven from our shores, will soon be remembered only as once having existed in our land, gladdening, with its numbers, the open wolds and downs of our country, and spreading life and activity over the otherwise desolate and uninteresting heath. They have existed till within a few years on those extensive sheep walks, the wolds of Yorkshire, from whence I have seen their eggs; and in the earlier time of Montague were to be met with on the plains of Salisbury, but are now, I fear, limited entirely to the county of Norfolk, upon the open fields of which a sad remnant of them yet exists. C. W. Spurgeon, Esq., of Lynn, to whom I am indebted for the rare egg figured, gives me the following information:—He says, “I am much afraid that all the male birds are extinct in this kingdom, and, therefore, a few years will end this species altogether. I have seen fourteen to eighteen females in the various large fields in the west of Norfolk, called breaks; they are very wild and difficult of approach.”

The Bustard makes no nest, but lays its eggs, two in number, upon the bare ground.







## OTIS TETRAX. (LINN.)

LITTLE BUSTARD.  

---

LIKE the large species, the Little Bustard lays its eggs upon the bare ground.

They are said to be from three to five in number, “of a clear, shining, grass-green colour, without spot or stain.” This is, I think, most likely an oversight, and that the faint, undefined spots may have been overlooked. Any one who had previously seen the eggs of the Greater Bustard, would look for a similar character in those of the present species, and he would be pleased in observing the close resemblance which they bear to each other, distinct as they are from those of all other birds.

I would however, by no means dispute the fact, that there may be spotless varieties.





L





## ARDEA PURPUREA. (LINN.)

CRESTED PURPLE HERON.  

---

WITH the exception of the Common Heron, this beautiful tribe of birds has but little claim to be accounted British; all of the species being very rare visitants of our shores. From an eye witness of its habits (Mr. J. D. Hoy, whose Ornithological researches on the Continent have added many of the rarer eggs to our cabinets) I have the following information regarding the present species. "The Purple Heron does not begin to breed so early as the Common Heron, the end of May being the time of incubation: it is of a shy and retired disposition, keeping for the most part amongst reeds and woody swamps. It has much the habits of the Bittern, and when standing on the watch for its prey, has at a little distance, something the appearance of that bird, with the neck very much bent and drawn in between the shoulders.

They breed in society, like the Common Heron, very frequently on low trees, in plantations of Willow and Alder, in the vicinity of rivers, and large inland waters: the nests being often only a few feet from the ground upon which they are likewise sometimes placed, in swamps overgrown with tall rushes, and in extensive tracts of reeds; they are large and flat, and are either composed entirely of sticks, finer towards the inside, or lined with pieces of dried sedge and rushes. The eggs are commonly four, rarely five in number, and differ considerably in size and shape as well as in colour, some being considerably darker than Fig. 1 of the Plate.

ARDEA NYCTICORAX. (LINN.)

NIGHT HERON.

---

THE Night Heron although rarely to be met with in this country, is not unfrequent on some parts of the Continent; and is abundant in America as will be seen by the interesting account which I have copied from the third volume of Audubon's Ornithological Biography.

“ This species breeds in communities around the stagnant ponds either near plantations, or in the interior of retired and secluded swamps, as well as on some of the sea islands covered with evergreen trees. Their Heronries are formed either in low bushes or in middle sized or tall trees, as seems most convenient or secure. In the Floridas they are partial to the mangroves that overhang the salt water; in Louisiana, they prefer the cypresses, and in the middle States they find the cedars most suitable. In some breeding places, within a few miles of Charleston, which I visited, the nests were placed on low bushes or crowded together, some within a yard of the ground, others raised seven or eight feet above it; many being placed flat on the branches, whilst others were in the forks. Hundreds of these might be seen at once, as they were built on the side of the bushes fronting the water. Those which I found in the Floridas, were all placed on the south-west side of mangrove islands, but were further apart from each other, some being only about a foot above high-water mark, while others were in the very tops of the trees, which however scarcely exceeded twenty feet in height. In some inland swamps in Louisiana, I saw them placed on the tops of tall cypress trees about one hundred feet high, and along with *Ardea Herodias* and *Ardea alba*.”

## ARDEA CINEREA. (LATH.)

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I HAVE often been surprised by observing the Heron, at the time of the breeding season, passing over those parts of the country which I knew to be very far distant from any Heronry ; especially when I have noticed its heavy flight and slow progress on its way home. It is wonderful to what long distances they will patiently wing their way in their excursions in search of fish.

There are but few breeding places of the Heron in this country, and the opportunities of observing them are consequently rare.

Their nests are usually placed in some of the highest trees which the neighbourhood will afford ; they are large, and composed of sticks, lined with a quantity of dry grass, wool, and other soft materials, and contain four or five eggs.

Nothing can be more ornamental to a gentleman's grounds than these elegant birds, graceful in all their motions.

One of the delicious islands in the lake of Derwentwater is rendered still more enchantingly beautiful by their presence.





1



2



## CIX.

### BOTAURUS STELLARIS. (STEPH.)

#### COMMON BITTERN.

---

ALTHOUGH this beautiful and conspicuous bird might at one time have been met with in most of the marshy districts of this country, where it used to breed, there is now no hopes that so large a bird will much longer remain a tenant of our land, or that it can long escape the multitudes of idle gunners who infest the country. The increase of population, and with it that of cultivation, and the inclosure of our waste lands, is daily decreasing, and will in a few years altogether exterminate, these wild tenants of the waste.

The nest of the Bittern is found in marshy districts, and is composed of sticks and reeds, placed amongst rushes and other herbage; and is said to contain four or five eggs, resembling the one at Fig. 1, of the plate, which was kindly lent me by Mr. Yarrell.

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### BOTAURUS MINUTUS.

#### LITTLE BITTERN.

A STUFFED specimen of the Little Bittern, together with its eggs, is now in the Newcastle Museum, and was formerly a part of the Allan or Wycliffe Museum. From one of these the drawing is made; but of their history, I am sorry to say that I know nothing, and am therefore unable to determine whether or not they were discovered in this country. The Little Bittern is met with in various parts of Europe; and is said to breed upon the ground, in marshy situations, making a large nest, of reeds, grass, and other herbage, and laying five or six eggs.









## CICONIA ALBA. (BELLON.)

WHITE STORK.

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THE Stork which on the various parts of the Continent, where it breeds, is held as sacred, as the Ibis was, by the Egyptians, is in consequence, everywhere, so strictly protected, that it is very difficult to obtain its eggs.

The Storks begin to appear about their breeding places in the middle of March, unless the season is very cold and backward; these are in the very heart of some of the towns of Holland and Germany, and the situation of the nest upon the tops of their towers, churches, and outbuildings, upon many of which boxes are placed for their accommodation. Mr. Hoy who has seen them upon a cart-wheel elevated on the top of a strong pole, for that purpose, says that they also, though seldom, build in lofty trees.

The nest, in consequence of its accumulating from year to year, becomes very large; it is composed externally of large sticks, becoming smaller towards the inside, and is, sometimes, lined with pieces of wool or the dry stems of plants mixed with the smaller sticks. The eggs, which are originally white, or slightly tinted with cream-colour, soon become soiled and dirty; they are from three to four in number, Mr. Hoy says rarely if ever five.

For the egg from which the drawing is made, I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. John Hancock, of Newcastle.





C.



C.

PLATALEA LEUCORODIA. (LINN.)

SPOONBILL.

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THE Spoonbill, though pretty plentiful on many parts of the Continent, is especially so in Holland, where it breeds, choosing, like the Heron, the tops of high trees for the position of its nest; and like it, when its favourite situation is not to be met with, building it amongst the reeds and rushes of the marshes, which it frequents. Its eggs, which are from two to four in number, are most commonly marked with red, as represented in the Plate, but are sometimes of a spotless white.

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Up to the present period in the progress of this work, the notices which accompany the drawings of each egg, however vague or uninteresting some of them may be, are the result (with a very few exceptions) either of personal and oft repeated observation, or are derived from the unquestionable authority of my friends and correspondents.

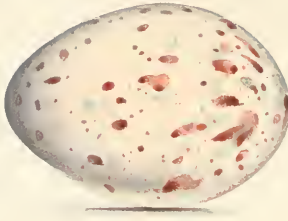
From the commencement of the work the eggs with which I was most intimately acquainted have been first figured, leaving to the last those of rare occurrence, about which little that could be depended upon was known, in the hope that ere it became necessary to draw them, some additional information might be gained: these must now be figured in their turn, and, however unsatisfactory the descriptions accompanying some of them may be to others, they will prove so to none more than to myself; many of these will be given with hesitation and a want of confidence, and should additional light be thrown upon the history of any, now doubtful, before the conclusion of the work, it shall then be added.







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2



3



LXXVII.

GALLINULA CREX. (TEMM.)

CORNCRAKE, LAND RAIL.

---

THE Corncrake is most frequent towards the northern part, but is pretty generally spread throughout the whole of our island; it breeds also in the Shetland islands, where I have seen it sitting upon the stone walls, on which it had a singular appearance. We also met with it in Norway. It makes but a very slight nest of dry grass, and breeds in our meadows amongst the long grass, where its nest is frequently exposed by the mower; the eggs are from seven to ten in number.—I have seen some much more beautiful than the plate, the spots large, and inclining to many colours.—Fig. 1.

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RALLUS AQUATICUS. (LINN.)

WATER RAIL.

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BIRDS, like the present and the succeeding, are now so rare in this country, their places of resort so few and confined, and, at the same time, difficult of access, that we have few opportunities of knowing much of their habits or nidification. To I. D. Salmon, Esq., I am indebted for the egg figured, which is precisely similar to those contained in two other nests in his possession; they resembled the nest of the Water-hen, and were placed in similar situations; one upon rushes, floating on the water, the other upon a clump upon its margin; the greatest number of eggs was seven.—Fig. 2.

GALLINULA PORZANA. (LATH.)

SPOTTED GALLINULE, WATER CRAKE.

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LIKE the last, which it much resembles in habit, the Spotted Gallinule, makes its nest amongst rushes, in the immediate vicinity of water ; it is composed of rushes and coarse grasses, like that of the Water Hen ; the eggs are also very similar to those of that bird ; they are from seven to ten in number.—Fig. 3.





CXXXVIII.

GALLINULA BAILLONII. (TEMM.)

BAILLONS CRAKE.

---

THE kindness of my friend Mr. Doubleday, has enabled me to figure the egg of the present species. It is, both in shape and colour, very different from those of the rest of the genus, as will be readily seen on reference to the Plate.

Baillons Crake is with us a rare visitant, and has not been known to breed on our shores; it is not uncommon on various parts of the Continent, and Mr. Selby informs us that it is well known in the neighbourhood of Boulogne, where it breeds in the marshes.

Mr. Hoy took the eggs in 1835, near the River Meuse, in the north-eastern parts of Belgium, but was unable to meet with them in the same locality the following year; the nest he states, is extremely difficult to find; it is placed like that of the Water Hen, upon tufts of reeds or rushes, upon the banks of rivers, or by the margin of ponds, and marshy districts; it is of sedge and water growing plants, and contains eight or ten eggs.









## XXXI.

### GALLINULA CHLOROPUS. (LATH.)

COMMON GALLINULE, WATER HEN, MOOR HEN, &c.

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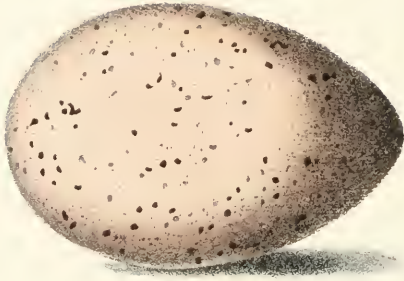
I know of no bird, when in a state of nature, the eggs of which differ so much in size as those of the Water Hen ; they are met with, of every intermediate proportion, from Fig. 1 to Fig. 2 of the Plate.

The Water Hen breeds in situations somewhat similar to those selected by the Bald Coot, by the sides of lakes, ponds, and rivers ; the nest is usually placed upon a heap of broken reeds, or tufts of rushes, near the surface of the water, and more especially when surrounded by it, sometimes upon the roots or old decayed stump of a tree growing from its bank ; it is rather large, and is formed of reeds and rushes, and such like materials. The eggs are from five to ten in number, and are laid in May or June.

Montague observes, that great numbers of these birds are annually destroyed by reason of their nests being placed so near the water, that they are swept away by our summer floods.







## FULICA ATRA. (LINN.)

## COOT, BALD COOT.

THE Bald Coot breeds in most parts of England, upon the margins of lakes, ponds, and rivers, usually towards the latter end of May or beginning of June, though at this time I have seen young ones in the water, which leave the nest soon after they are hatched.

Through the kindness of the Rev. R. H. Brandling, of Gosforth, on whose property they breed in abundance, I have had an opportunity of examining many of their nests. They are large, and apparently clumsy at first sight, but are amazingly strong and compact; they are sometimes built on a tuft of rushes, but more commonly amongst reeds; some are supported by those that lie prostrate on the water, whilst others have their foundations at its bottom, and are raised till they become from six to twelve inches above its surface, sometimes in a depth of one and a half or two feet. So firm are some of them, that, whilst up to the knees in water, they afforded me a seat sufficiently strong to support my weight. They are composed of flags and broken reeds, finer towards the inside, and contain from seven to ten eggs.

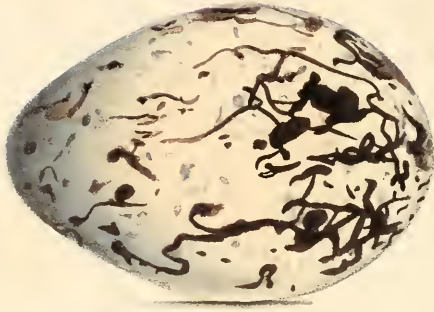
That the nest may rise two or three inches with the rising of the water from a flood, is quite probable, from the elasticity of the reeds to which it is attached. Bewick relates the following curious anecdote:—"A Bald Coot built her nest in Sir William Middleton's lake, at Belsay, Northumberland, among the rushes, which were afterwards loosened by the wind, and of course the nest was driven about and floated upon the surface of the water in every direction; notwithstanding which, the female contrived to sit as usual, and brought out her young upon her moveable habitation."

This would almost seem confirmatory of the ridiculous tales told of floating nests, could one be led to believe that this bird, foreseeing the event, had designedly so constructed its nest as to be water-proof.

The eggs vary a good deal in size, being sometimes considerably less than the Plate, though in their character and colouring they are readily known, differing only in being a shade lighter.







## XXXVIII.

### HÆMATOPUS OSTRALEGUS. (LINN.)

OYSTER CATCHER, SHELDER, SEA PIE, &c.

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THE Oyster Catcher breeds on many parts of our shores; in Norfolk, and on the Ferne islands on the Northumberland coast; it is more plentiful farther north, being numerous on most of the Shetland islands. I have usually met with its eggs in the first week in June, the time in which it begins to lay, and the only period in which I have before had an opportunity of seeing them. Whilst in Shetland, I found many quite fresh as late as July, and should therefore conclude that it must be double-brooded. It is very particular in its selection of a situation for its eggs, always making choice of a piece of gravel or stoney ground, if to be met with, especially if mixed with bits of broken shells, to which it shows a curious partiality, carefully collecting them together and arranging them in a slight hole in the ground: when these are not to be found, it selects small flat pieces of stone. There is something very singular in the habits of this bird, which has always puzzled me greatly: simple as are the hard materials composing its nest, it is as particular in the arrangement of them as many of our smaller birds in the softer composition of their neat and beautiful abodes. In this it seems to have much difficulty in pleasing itself, and makes numerous nests ere it fixes upon one; this I have always noticed, and in some instances have seen as many as a dozen, all apparently as well finished as the one containing the eggs. Nothing can exceed the very extreme and anxious solicitude evinced by this bird on your approaching its nest; it flies round and round you, uttering its loud

and piercing cry, and becoming more and more noisy as you near its nest. It lays three eggs, varying as figured in the plate; the spotted variety occurring more frequently than the other. The young birds run soon after they leave the shell, and are very active; on being pursued, they hide their little heads in the first hole, as a beat fighting-cock will do, considering themselves safe when you are no longer visible; the down with which they are covered is beautifully mottled.





## NUMENIUS ARQUATA. (LATII.)

COMMON CURLEW.  

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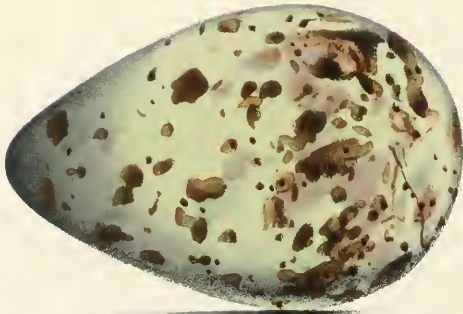
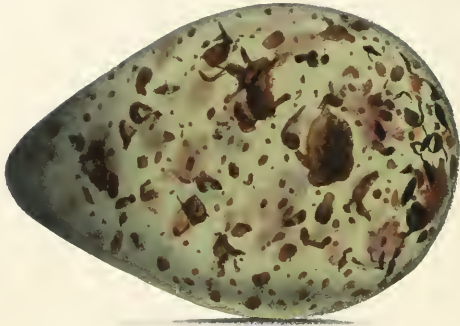
I HAVE never traversed the lone wild heath, deserted, except by the feathered race, and at a moment in which I have felt the solitary dreariness of the scene, that the wild cry of the Curlew, so much in accordance with all around me, has not come like the voice of a companion to my ear, and produced a silent feeling of gratitude to that Being who has thus adorned with life and beauty the most sterile and least interesting of his works; and I have thought how great would be the void in the creation, were we deprived of this single branch of his glorious works. Upon such wild and deserted heaths, and upon downs and open sheep-walks, especially in places which are wet and marshy, the Curlew breeds; its nest, when any, consists of a few pieces of dried grass, collected together in a hollow, in some tuft of the same material; the eggs are four in number, and differ a good deal in the depth of the ground colour, and also in the number of the spots. The two figures represent two opposite varieties, those intermediate being much more frequent; they are amazingly large when compared with those of many other birds.

Whilst in Norway, we were much amused with what appeared to us to be quite a new and unnoticed habit in the Grallatores, or Waders. One day, eagerly pursuing a bird of this family, and having searched in vain a marsh, towards which it had flown, we were about to relinquish the pursuit, when much to our amazement we discovered it seated high above our heads, on the top of a tree: so contrary was this to any of the habits of this class of birds with which we were then acquainted, that we concluded that it must be a species unknown to us. We afterwards found it, however, to be a

practice by no means uncommon with the Redshank and Greenshank, and what surprised us more than all, was to see the Long-legged Curlew alight, as it frequently did, on the tip top of the pine forests; and to hear it, as it passed from tree to tree, utter its loud whistle. The Curlew breeds in April and May.







Engraved by W. C. Hewitson.

Day & Haghe Lith<sup>rs</sup> to the King<sup>st</sup> St

## NUMENIUS PHÆOPUS. (LATH.)

WHIMBREL.  

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THE Whimbrel, like the closely-allied species, the Curlew, breeds in those uncultivated districts which are far removed from human habitation, on open moors and wastes, choosing those which are marshy, and composed of moss and peaty soil, which is in those districts substituted for coal. It is, however, during the summer season of much greater rarity than the Curlew. I am not aware of any breeding place in this country, besides the Shetland islands, upon two of which (Yell and Hascosea) only, they are to be met with, in very small and rapidly decreasing numbers, their eggs being there considered a delicacy.

The nest of the Whimbrel is nothing more than a slight depression in the surface of the ground. The few instances from which I have had an opportunity of ascertaining the fact, do not allow me to state positively its number of eggs; in none of those instances did the nests contain more than three, notwithstanding which, I think I may without hesitation assert, that four will prove to be their constant number when complete, judging from the undeviating practice of every species of this family of birds, about the eggs of which we know anything. The note of the Whimbrel, when disturbed by your approaching its nest, is like that of the Curlew, in loud, clear, and closely repeated ejaculations.





XXXX



## TOTANUS CALIDRIS. (BECHST.)

REDSHANK.  

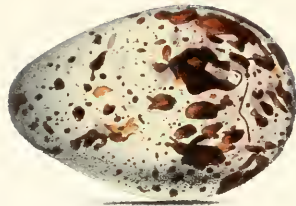
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LIKE the Snipe, the Redshank breeds in uncultivated marshy wastes ; it is most common in the extensive fenny districts of Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire ; a few pairs are, however, dispersed throughout the country, an occasional nest being found on several of the wet heathy moors of the north of England ; its nest is nothing more than a few dry grasses placed in a depression on the ground, or in a tuft of herbage, and in the near neighbourhood of water ; it lays four eggs, much resembling those of the Peewit in size and general appearance, but differing from them in being more pointed, and narrower towards the smaller end, the ground-colour lighter, and the spots usually more numerous, smaller, and of a lighter brown ; the first Figure of the Plate is an example of the usual character ; Fig. 2, a variety sometimes met with.— I have seen a very beautiful one differing from either, in having large blueish-grey blotches mixed with the others.









CL.

TOTANUS GLAREOLA. (TEMME.)

WOOD SANDPIPER.

---

FOR the following interesting particulars of a bird little known, together with the egg, I have to thank the assiduity of Mr. Hoy.

“This species is migratory, retiring in September, and making its appearance early in April. That it breeds rather early I infer, from having met with the young, feathered, and capable of flying a short distance, on the 11th of June. I regret that I did not discover the bird till late in the season.

A great portion of Dutch Brabant, more particularly the southern and eastern parts, are covered by large tracts of heath; the soil of a light sandy nature. A great number of peat bogs and shallow pools of water are dispersed over this district. Most of the small streams are skirted by swampy ground, where the bog myrtle grows in the greatest luxuriance, with stunted bushes of alder and willow. These situations are the favourite haunt of this Sandpiper during the breeding season. While the hen bird is sitting, the male flies round in wide circles, and at a considerable elevation. The female sits close; and the nest is extremely difficult to find.

If you approach the spot when they have young, and especially if a dog is with you, the old birds will fly round in the most anxious manner; and will hover over the dog, within a few feet; then suddenly darting off, mount high in the air, pouncing down again with great rapidity on the intruder. If you have observed the actions and manœuvres of the Redshank, during the breeding season, you will have seen very much the habits of the Wood Sandpiper.

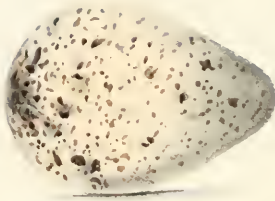
It is far from being numerous in the localities where I met with it; yet many pairs are dispersed over these districts, where they have long been known to breed, from information

which I obtained from several intelligent sportsmen, to whom the bird was well known.

Although I met with the young in the downy state, and partially feathered, I only obtained one nest with eggs.

The nest is generally placed at a short distance from the water, among stunted heath, or scrubby plants of the bog myrtle, or among coarse grass and rushes. It is placed in a hollow, and is of dry grass and other plants. The eggs are four in number."





## XII.

### TRINGA HYPOLEUCOS. (LINN.)

COMMON SANDPIPER, SAND LARK, &c.

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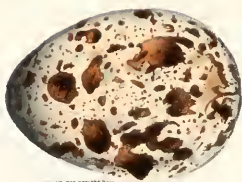
THIS elegant little bird breeds about the middle of May, and like all its congeners (as far as my experience goes) lays invariably four eggs, and, as I have mentioned in describing those of the Peewit, admirably adapted by their shape and arrangement in the nest, so as to require the least possible covering; and this is quite necessary, the eggs of this, and all the Waders, being remarkably large in proportion to the size of the bird, when compared with those of most other species.

The Common Sandpiper frequents almost every river, skimming over its surface, and uttering its sweet, melancholy whistle. It lays its eggs either amongst the large dockens (*Tussilago*) that grow upon their banks, or upon the gravel beds by their margin: in the former situation, where there is apparently less need, it makes a slight nest, by collecting a little dry grass, and placing it in a hole scratched for that purpose; in the latter, none, contenting itself with a hole only; but here it is a very difficult matter to discover the eggs, placed as they are amongst the small pebbles, with which their colouring and markings are so much in accordance; and here instinct teaches it, that a collection of grass where none grows, would only add to their being the more readily detected. I have found its eggs upon the bare rock, where no such hole could be made for their reception. They vary, in general, but slightly. The first figure shows the usual shape and markings; the latter, the most distant variety I have seen. There are intermediate ones, but the spots are generally minute.









## TRINGA MACULARIA. (LINN.)

## SPOTTED SANDPIPER.

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America seems the favourite resort of this species, which according to Wilson, is met with on the shores of most of the large rivers, creeks, and streams of Pennsylvania, and is in great abundance along the rivers Schuylkill and Delaware, and their tributary waters. He says, "About the middle of May, they resort to the adjoining corn fields to breed, where I have frequently found and examined their nests. One of these now before me, and which was built at the root of a hill of Indian corn on high ground, is composed wholly of short pieces of dry straw. The eggs are four. The young run about with wonderful speed as soon as they leave the shell, and are then covered with down of a dull drab colour, marked with a single streak of black down the middle of the back, and with another behind each ear." Fig. 1 of the Plate is drawn from an egg, kindly lent me by Mr. Charles Adamson, of Newcastle. It was brought home by Mr. Audubon. Fig. 2 is also from America, and is from the collection of Mr. Yarrell.







CXLIV.

RECURVIROSTRA AVOCETTA. (LINN.)

AVOCET.

---

THE Avocet used to breed in some of the marshy districts of Norfolk, Lincolnshire, and Kent: and, I believe, a nest and eggs may yet occasionally be found in some of the least frequented parts of Norfolk. It is, however, too singular and remarkable a bird to remain much longer unmolested in any part of this country; and will soon be upon the list of those birds which were once, but are now no longer, indigenous with us.

The eggs of the Avocet are said to be two, rarely three, in number, and are deposited in a slight depression of the surface, either upon the bare ground, or on a small quantity of dry grass. All the specimens which I have seen, bear considerable resemblance to that of the plate; with the exception of some, said to be those of the Avocet, in the collections of Mr. Allis and Mr. Baines, of York, the ground colour of which is nearly white, marked with small spots of deep brown and neutral tint.









## LIMOSA MELANURA. (LEISLER.)

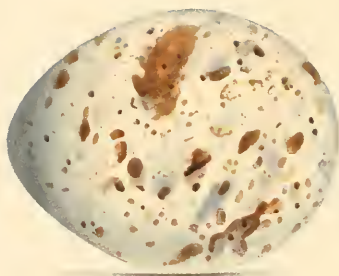
BLACK TAILED GODWIT.  

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THE Black-tailed Godwit breeds in some of our fens though sparingly, and in situations similar to those which are chosen by the Ruff. They arrive in March, and commence laying their eggs early in May, they are four, and most commonly like Fig. 1 of the Plate, although varieties of a lighter colour not unfrequently occur, some resembling Fig. 2, others, Mr. Hoy informs me, have scarcely perceptible markings. The nest is composed of dry grass and other vegetables, and is concealed amongst the coarse herbage of the swamps and low meadows. Mr. Hoy adds, that when disturbed, they are clamorous, flying round and vociferating the cry of grotto, grutto, grutto, by which name indeed the bird is known among the country people in Holland.







## SCOLOPAX RUSTICOLA. (LINN.)

WOODCOCK.

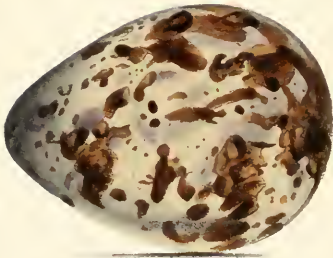
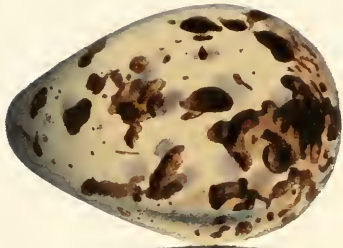
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NOTICES of the Woodcock remaining in this country to breed have for many years been recorded, but these of rare occurrence; of late, however, there are numerous instances of its nest or young ones having been discovered; whether or not this may arise from the much greater attention which has recently been given to the study of Natural History, and the increasing interest felt in each department of it, or to the fact of a larger number of the birds becoming stationary in this country, it is difficult to say: I should suppose the latter to be the case, judging from analogy. The Missel Thrush, for instance, which, only a few years ago was so rare (at least in the north of England) that Mr. Bewick had considerable difficulty in procuring one from which to draw, is now everywhere abundant. Why the Woodcock leaves these islands at all it is difficult to guess. It goes to a country (Norway) which, during the breeding season, is exceedingly similar to our own in climate; it has, it is true, its boundless forests, but in these it prefers those places from which the trees have been cut down, and commonly in the outskirts, or bordering upon the rivers. Whilst there I had the pleasure of taking its eggs: they were upon the bare ground, under some brushwood, and in a place from which the timber had been cleared, and in which the young spruce firs were again springing. The old bird sits very closely. Whilst wandering through these never-ending pine woods, it was a very rare occurrence to raise one during the day time, although in the evening, towards sunset, and for hours afterwards, numbers of them were constantly passing over the woods, uttering a kind of chirping note. I have the egg

also taken from a nest in a wood in Suffolk, and kindly sent me by my friend, Mr. Edward Kerrich, together with the nest, which consisted of oak leaves, being simply the surface of the ground at that time of the year. The Woodcock breeds early in May, laying four eggs; the ground colour is sometimes deeper than that of the Plate.







CLIII.

SCOLOPAX MAJOR. (GMEL.)

GREAT SNIPE

---

THE egg of the Great Snipe is another of those rarities for which we are indebted to the perseverance of Mr. Hoy; from whom I have the following particulars.

There is no doubt that by far the greater number of the Great Snipe retire to the swamps of the north to breed; still a considerable number are spread over the fens and morasses of Holland, and have hitherto escaped observation during the time of breeding. It may, however, be met with during that season, though not in great numbers, in the marshy districts lying between Gouda and Gorinchem, and an extensive fenny tract, abounding in peat bogs, in the eastern part of Dutch Brabant. Bordering upon the Dutch side of the river Meuse, is another locality, over which they are found scattered during the breeding season.

The Great Snipe resembles the Jack Snipe very much in its habits; lying close, and when disturbed, rarely flying far. It begins to breed early in May. The nest is similar to and placed in the same situation as that of the common species. The eggs are four in number.







## XXXII.

### SCOLOPAX GALLINAGO. (LINN.)

#### SNIFE, SNIPPUC, OR HOARSE GOWK.

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THE Snipe is most commonly to be met with in low, marshy, and boggy grounds, and in such situations a few of them breed in most parts of this country; it is, however, exceedingly difficult, in describing the usual breeding place of any bird, to limit it to any particular situation. In confirmation of this, I met with several nests of the Snipe during the present summer, affording so great a deviation from their usual position that I was strongly inclined to doubt their identity, till I had proved it. They were upon Foula, the most westerly of the Shetland Islands, against the dry heathy side of a steep hill, and at an elevation of not less than from 500 to 1,000 feet above the marshy plain.

The Snipe builds its slight nest amongst rushes or heath, or in a clump of grass, making no farther preparation for its eggs than by scratching together a few bits of the same materials in a hollow of the ground; the eggs are always (as far as I have been able to ascertain) four in number; though the Rev. Mr. Low, in his *Fauna Orcadensis*, mentions particularly his having "several times found six;" the only way in which this can be accounted for, is by supposing that two birds must have laid their eggs in the same nest, as the Snipe forms one of that class of Waders which, I think, invariably lay four eggs, formed and disposed in the nest, as I have before stated, of the Peewit and Common Sandpiper, so as to meet in the centre and occupy the least space possible.

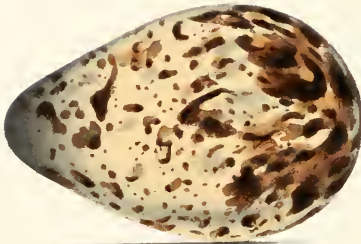
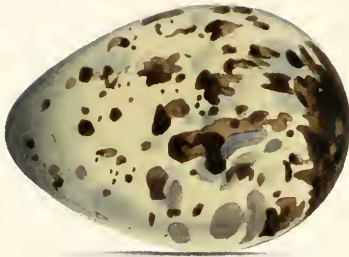
The size of the egg is also a strong argument against its laying more than four, and a very remarkable production for so small a bird, being as large as that of the Pigeon and of the Rook, and considerably larger than those of the Magpie

and Partridge, birds three or four times its own weight and size. The most usual character of the egg is as shown at Fig. 1, with large dark blotches, principally at the thicker end. Fig. 2, which closely resembles some eggs of the Redshank, is much less frequent. I have some in my collection a good deal lighter and more sparingly spotted than either.— Snipes lay their eggs in April or the early part of May: those which I took in Shetland were fresh, though at the end of June; probably owing to the climate and very exposed situation, as I am not aware that the Snipe has more than one brood in the year.





CXXIV



## MACHETES PUGNAX. (CUVIER.)

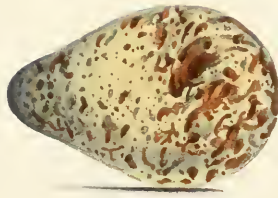
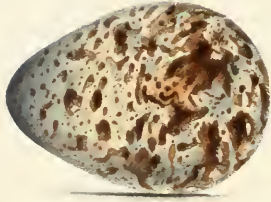
RUFF (Male.) REEVE (Female.)

THE Ruff which breeds in some of the fenny districts of Lincolnshire and Cambridge, seems to prefer those of the most swampy nature and covered with coarse grass, sedge, and other plants; many of them breeding together in the same marsh, in which such favourable situations occur. The nest which is placed amongst the coarse herbage, is of grass, and other similar materials, by which it is surrounded.

The eggs (it is almost unnecessary to state) are invariably four, such being the case, as I have before mentioned, with regard to all this class of birds, unless, having been plundered of their first eggs, they are driven to a second laying, in which case the number may be found deficient. In colour and markings they differ much, those from which the Plate is drawn, were sent me by my friend Mr. Doubleday, who has selected them from numbers, which are brought annually to the Leadenhall market, amongst the numerous representatives of those of the Peewit; Mr. Doubleday tells me, that some of these eggs are of a beautiful clear green, when fresh, which is peculiar to them, and which they soon afterwards lose: I regret much not being able to colour my plate from fresh specimens; the eggs are a good deal like those of the Snipe and Redshank, from the first they differ in being larger, and from the latter in the arrangement of the spots, which is readily seen, but difficult to describe; they are seldom so pointed at the smaller end. Fig. 1 may be taken as the best representation of the usual contour; Fig. 2, I think, shows the arrangement of spots, which is most cha-

racteristic ; Fig. 3, is a variety very much resembling eggs of the Terns. The usual time of breeding of the Ruff is the beginning of June : Mr. Hoy tells me, however, that they frequently have eggs early in May. The young, in the downy state, are extremely prettily spotted, and like the Snipe soon quit the nest, hiding themselves amongst the herbage, so that it is very difficult to find them without a good dog.





LXXIII.

TRINGA VARIABILIS. (MEYER.)

DUNLIN, PURRE.

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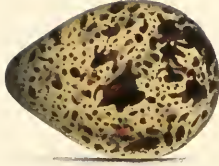
THE Dunlin breeds upon desert heaths and marshy moors, in situations similar to the Snipe ; in such places it is found, though not abundantly throughout the north of Britain.— I have found its nest in Shetland ; and Mr. Salmon has met with it in abundance in Orkney ; from him I possess a very beautiful and remarkable variety of the egg ; the ground colour is of a bluish-white, with deep brown spots. The Dunlin breeds in May or June, and lays four eggs, in a slight hollow on the surface of the ground.







1



2



#### CIV.

### PHALAROPUS HYPERBOREUS. (LATH.)

#### RED-NECKED PHALAROPE.

---

THIS interesting little bird is, I believe, confined in this country, during the breeding season, to one or two of the Orkney Islands, near the fresh water locks of which it makes its nest. On the neighbouring isles of Shetland I searched for it in vain, although I explored the whole pretty narrowly. I have, besides, the authority of Dr. Edmonston, an ornithologist, and a resident upon the spot, for stating that it does not breed there, as mentioned by Mr. Gould. On Sanda, their chief resort, they are by no means numerous; and from their extreme tameness, will, I sadly fear, ere long become extinct, if they have not already been extirminated, by the ruthless hand of Mr. Dunn, of whom I have before had occasion to speak. The best account which I have seen, relating to the nidification of the Red-necked Phalarope, is in Loudon's Magazine, by Mr. Salmon, who kindly presented me with the prettily marked egg from which the figure is drawn. From that account I have taken the liberty of copying the following extract.

“This beautiful little bird appeared to be very tame; although we shot two pairs, those that were swimming about did not take the least notice of the report of the gun; and they seemed to be much attached to each other, for when one of them flew to a short distance the other directly followed; and while I held a female that was wounded in my hand, its mate came and fluttered before my face. We were much gratified in watching the motions of these elegant little creatures, as they kept swimming about, and were for ever dipping their bills in the water; and so intent were they upon their

occupation, that they did not take the least notice of us, although within a few yards of them. After some little difficulty we were fortunate in finding their nests, which were placed in small tufts of grass, growing close to the edge of the lock; they were formed of dried grass, and were about the size of a Titlark's, but much deeper. They had but just commenced laying (June 13th) as we found only from one to two eggs in each nest." My friend, Mr. G. C. Atkinson, found the Red-necked Phalarope breeding abundantly on the margins of the lakes of Iceland.

The eggs are four in number, and vary but little in colour; in size, however, they differ considerably, some specimens being as large as the egg of the Grey Phalarope, figured in the Plate.

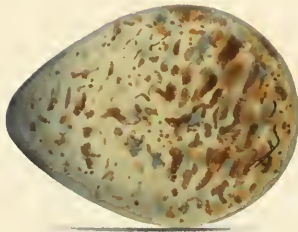
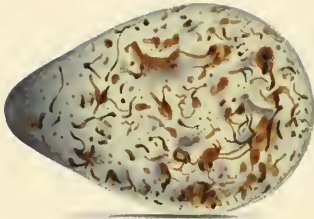
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## PHALAROPUS LOBATUS. (FLEM.)

### GREY PHALAROPE.

OF the habits of the Grey Phalarope very little is yet known. That they are similar to those of the allied species just described there can be little doubt. Mr. G. C. Atkinson met with several in Iceland, in the same localities where they were no doubt breeding, although he was not fortunate enough to find a nest. The egg drawn is from the collection of my friend, Mr. Yarrell, and was, I believe, brought home by some one of the officers accompanying one of the Arctic expeditions. Fig. 2.





LIII.

STREPSILAS COLLARIS. (TEMM.)

TURNSTONE.

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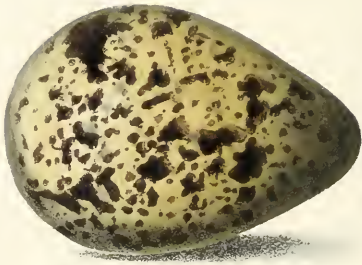
I have never yet heard of an instance of the Turnstone breeding upon the British islands, although led to expect it, from having at various times seen several of the birds upon the Northumberland coast, and upon the Shetland islands during the summer months; these are, however, usually in small flocks, and very probably yet immature. It was, therefore, with peculiar pleasure that I discovered its retreat upon the coast of Norway, during a bird-nesting excursion made for the purpose of adding rarities to the present work.

We had visited numerous islands with little encouragement, and were about to land upon a flat rock, bare except where here and there grew tufts of grass, or stunted juniper clinging to its surface, when our attention was attracted by the singular cry of a Turnstone, which, in its eager watch had seen our approach, and perched itself upon an eminence of the rock, assuring us, by its querulous, oft-repeated note, and anxious motions that its nest was there; we remained in the boat a short time until we had watched it behind a tuft of grass, near which, after a minute search, we succeeded in finding the nest, in a situation in which I should never have expected to meet with a bird of this class breeding: it was placed against a ledge of the rock, and consisted of nothing more than the dropping leaves of the juniper bush, under a creeping branch of which the eggs, four in number, were snugly concealed, and admirably sheltered from the many storms by which these bleak and exposed rocks are visited, allowing just sufficient room for the bird to cover them. We afterwards found several more nests with little difficulty, although requiring a very close search. In sailing

amongst the many islands, with which this coast is everywhere studded, we had no difficulty in ascertaining those on which we should prove successful, and were frequently led to the spot, from a considerable distance, by the extreme anxiety and pugnacity evinced by this bird in its bold attacks upon the larger sea fowl, especially Richardson's Skua (*Lestris Richardsonii*), the egg-devouring enemy of other sea birds. The several nests that we examined were placed in the same situation as the one described, with the exception of two, one of which was under a slanting stone, the other on the bare rock; they all contained four eggs; sometimes of the very beautiful variety of Fig. 1, but more frequently approaching that of Fig. 2; I have seen specimens very nearly resembling some eggs of the Common Snipe. Their time of breeding is about the middle of June.







*Drawn in Stone by P. G. Wilson.*

I.

VANELLUS CRISTATUS (MEYER).

PEEWIT, LAPWING, &c.

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THE Peewit chooses various situations for its eggs: ploughed fields, heaths, commons, and marshy grounds; preferring a molehill, or other slight elevation: they are, however, occasionally found enveloped in water.

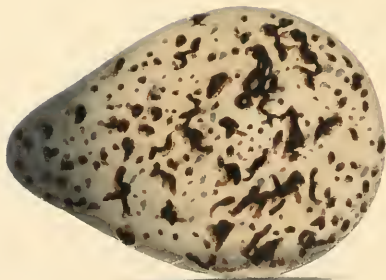
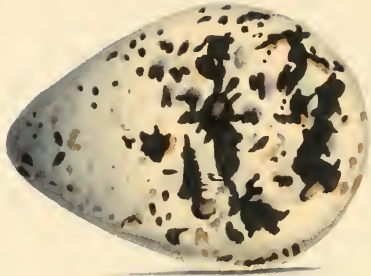
Like most of this class of birds, it makes little or no nest, its eggs, four in number, being deposited upon the bare ground, or on a small quantity of dry grass, rushes, stalks of heath, or other plants, in a hole scratched for that purpose, and barely large enough to contain them, though invariably arranged so as to occupy the least possible space, the small ends meeting in the centre.

I have never succeeded in surprising this bird upon its nest: it is ever on the look out, and, on your first entering a field, is on the wing, whirling about above your head, and endeavouring, by its manœuvres, to lead you from its nest.

I have heard its melancholy note long after dark. The eggs are greatly esteemed as a delicacy, and are consequently gathered for the table. The young run soon after they are hatched.







## CHARADRIUS PLUVIALIS. (LINN.)

GOLDEN PLOVER.  

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THE Golden Plover, though never numerous, is yet pretty generally, dispersed over our heathy moors during the breeding season, and is then rarely seen except in pairs; it is very watchful, and discovers itself long before you approach by its clear and plaintive whistle, which may be heard at a great distance, and is very deceiving; upon hearing it when in search of their eggs, I have frequently expected to see the bird close beside me, and after anxiously searching with my eyes all around, have discovered it perched at a distance of three or four hundred yards upon some hillock or rising ground upon which it mostly takes its stand.

The Golden Plover is another of that groupe of birds (comprising the genera *Tringa*, *Totanus*, *Scolopax*, &c.) which always lay four eggs.

They are very large, and placed in a hole in the ground barely big enough to contain them; this is its only nest, with the addition usually of a slight lining of dry grass.

Though as above-mentioned, very wary and difficult to approach, save in the dusk of the evening, it will sometimes, when the eggs are near hatching, almost allow itself to be trodden upon before it leaves the nest. I have found the eggs fresh in May and June; they are a good deal like those of the Peewit and Redshank, differing from the former in being of a lighter ground-colour, and from both in size; they are considerably larger than either, and have the spots for the most part of a deeper hue, being a very dark brown or blue-black.









CXLIII.

CHARADRIUS MORINELLUS. (LINN.)

DOTTEREL.

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IT had long been supposed that the Dotterel must breed in some of the higher districts of Cumberland, although, from the difficulties which present themselves to the rambler on those glorious mountains, enveloped as they are, for the greater part of the year, in a dense mist, the eggs remained undetected until the summer of 1835, when they were first discovered through the assiduity of Mr. Heysham, whose account I copy from the Magazine of Zoology and Botany:—  
“ In the neighbourhood of Carlisle, Dotterels seldom make their appearance before the middle of May, about which time they are occasionally seen, in different localities, in flocks, which vary in number from four to fifteen, and almost invariably resort to heaths, barren pastures, fallow ground, &c. in open and exposed situations, where they continue, if unmolested, from ten days to a fortnight, and then retire to the mountains in the vicinity of the lakes, to breed.

“ The most favourite breeding haunts of these birds are always near to or on the summits of the highest mountains, particularly those which are densely covered with the woolly fringe moss (*Trichostomum lanuginosum*).

“ In these lonely places they constantly reside nearly the whole of the breeding season, a considerable part of the time enveloped in clouds, and almost daily drenched with rain, or the wetting mists, so extremely prevalent in these dreary regions; and there can be little doubt that it is owing, in a great measure, to this peculiar feature in their economy, that they have remained so long in obscurity during the period of incubation.

“ After repeated excursions through the lake districts for

the express purpose, in the summer of 1835, of looking for their nests, I was so fortunate as to obtain the eggs in two different localities ; namely, three on Whiteside, contiguous to Helvellyn, on the 29th of June, and two on the 5th of July, on Robinson Fell, in the vicinity of Butternere ; the former had been incubated twelve or fourteen days, the latter only recently laid, and in both instances the birds were seen to leave their eggs."

The Dotterel also breeds in Scotland. The egg from which the accompanying drawing is taken (kindly lent me from the collection of Mr. Yarrell) was procured on the Grampian hills.

During an excursion to the lakes in the summer of 1830, with my friend, J. B. Giles, we saw the Dotterel on the highest point of Helvellyn, and so densely covered was every thing with cloud, that it allowed us to approach within a few feet of it.

In most of cases, the Dotterel will, I think, be found to lay four eggs ; and that the instance, mentioned by Mr. Heysham, of one sitting upon three, must have arisen from some accidental cause.



XXVIII



## XXVIII.

### CHARADRIUS HIATICULA. (LINN.)

#### RING DOTTEREL, RING PLOVER, SAND LARK.

---

THE Ring Dotterel breeds on most parts of our sea coast, being most frequent near the mouths of rivers and smaller streams; it makes no nest, but lays its four conical eggs in a slight hole on the surface of the ground, either amongst small gravel, or upon the little hillocks of sand which occur so commonly on our flat beach. In some that I have seen, the eggs present a very beautiful appearance upon the clean white sand, frequently near the root of some tall grasses which wave over them as a protection against the storm.—These active little birds are ever on the watch, and on wing long ere you reach their eggs, making little circuits round you, and uttering their sweet plaintive whistle, by which you may always infer the near neighbourhood of their eggs or young.

The Ring Dotterel begins to breed early in May. During the first week in June, in which we found several of their eggs, some of them fresh laid, there were also young ones running about. Of the two Figures in the Plate, the first is the most common, both as regards shape and colour; the other is, however, frequent.









CLII.

CHARADRIUS CANTIANUS. (LATH.)

KENTISH PLOVER.

---

THE Kentish Plover, according to Mr. Gould, is met with in considerable numbers near Great Yarmouth. It is also found along the flat and shingly beaches of Kent and Sussex, and is sure to be met with on Selsey Beach, and in the immediate neighbourhood of Hastings and Sheerness, near Sandwich, if sought for during the months of May, June, and July.

In a notice from Mr. Hoy, which accompanies an egg of this species, kindly procured for the use of this work, by Professor C. J. Temminck, he says: The Kentish Plover frequents the sea coast, and is found on those parts where there are extensive sandy flats. It makes no nest, but deposits its eggs, four in number, in a small hollow in the sand, or amongst fine shingle and broken shells.

Mr. Gould, in speaking of this and the following species, says that they lay five eggs. In this he is under a mistake, since no species of this family ever lays more than four.

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CHARADRIUS MINOR. (MEYER.)

LITTLE RING DOTTEREL.

THIS species was first pointed out as an inhabitant of Britain, by Mr. Doubleday, of Epping, who received it from Shoreham, in Sussex; and so young, that there is no doubt that it was bred there. The person who shot it, had long suspected, from its note, that it was a species yet unnoticed in this country.

With the beautiful egg drawn at Fig. 2, and the following notice, I have been favoured by Mr. Hoy:

“The Little Plover appears to be very rarely found on the

sea coast; but frequents in preference the banks of rivers, where it breeds. It lays its eggs on the sand, not a particle of grass or other material being used. It is very partial to sand banks, forming islands, which are often met with in some of the larger rivers of the continent. It may also frequently be found during the breeding season, upon those large extents of sand, which are met with at some little distance from the borders of rivers, overgrown in part with a coarse wiry grass."











## CYGNUS FERUS. (RAY.)

WHISTLING SWAN.  

---

THE Swan has been said to breed on some of the outer isles of Orkney. This may once have been the case, but that it has long ago ceased to remain during the breeding season on any of the British Islands, there can be no doubt. It is now at any time a rare visitor.

Mr. G. C. Atkinson, of Newcastle, who has furnished me with the following particulars, had the good fortune to meet with a nest and eggs of this species, during a visit to Iceland.

It was placed on the centre of a small island, not more than fifteen or twenty yards in diameter, and just rising above the fresh water lake by which it was surrounded. This was on the south west of Iceland, where they are seldom seen, although very abundant to the north of the island.

The nest was made of water-weeds, and raised about six inches above the sward. It was about eighteen inches in diameter, lined with similar materials, and contained three eggs, in the last stage of incubation.

CYGNUS BEWICKII. (YARRELL.)

BEWICK'S SWAN.

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EVERY Ornithologist must rejoice in the opportunity which the discovery of this fine species afforded, of paying a tribute to one, whose memory must be dear to each of them; but to those amongst whom the discovery originated, and by whom the inimitable works of our immortal townsman, are not held in greater estimation than the recollection of his amiable disposition and kindly feelings, it must be peculiarly gratifying.

Although to Mr. R. R. Wingate is due the credit of having made known the *C. Bewickii* as a distinct species, I cannot omit to state, that his attention was first directed to the subject, by the observation of my friend, Mr. John Hancock.

I am not aware that any thing is known with regard to the nidification of this species, it having, most likely, (if noticed at all by our arctic voyagers,) been overlooked as the other species, to which its habits no doubt closely approximate.

The time occupied by the Swan in sitting, is six weeks, nearly double that of the majority of birds; the young, too, are slow in arriving at their full growth, it being three months before they are fully fledged.



1



2



Drawn by W. C. Hayward.

Published by the Smithsonian Institution.

## ANSER PALUSTRIS. (FLEM.)

## GREY LAG WILD GOOSE.

---

THIS species is said to have bred at one time in the fenny districts of this country, but with regard to this there is I believe a good deal of uncertainty, it having been till within a few years, confounded with the following species. We were not successful in meeting with it in Norway, although we ascertained that a species of Goose, which, from description, we supposed to be the present, breeds upon the high grounds inland. For the egg, now figured, I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. Yarrell.

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 ANSER FERUS. (FLEM.)

## BEAN GOOSE.

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THE Bean Goose, which is now the Common Wild Goose of this Country, is said to breed on some of the Western isles of Scotland.

Mr. Selby saw several of them with their young ones, during an excursion in Sutherland-shire, upon the borders of one of the fresh-water lochs. We had the pleasure of finding a nest upon the centre of one of the numerous islands which cover the Norwegian sea. It was within a short distance of the

Arctic Circle, and was one of the very many islands, which we visited—low, flat, and varied with patches of bare rock and tufts of coarse grass, with pools of fresh water, and not exceeding a few yards in diameter. The nest was formed of a considerable quantity of coarse dry grass, thickly lined with feathers, and contained three eggs quite fresh; one of which, (from the pure whiteness of its shell) had evidently been laid that morning. This was in the beginning of June, and two months after the usual time of breeding, but is readily accounted for by the unremitting persecution, which every species of bird experiences, even in these remote districts. Parties visit the islands periodically, and plunder them of every egg, frequently destroying even those which have been too much incubated for their use, in order to secure to themselves fresh ones only, on their next visit. One of these parties had unluckily just preceded us, and thus rendered hopeless our chance of procuring eggs, of which we were in search.

We were told by those annually in the habit of taking the eggs, that they usually amount to four or five; we repeatedly saw the old birds passing from one island to another, but always wary and unapproachable. Fig. 2.







ANSER BRENTA. (FLEM.)

BRENT GOOSE.

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I AM glad of the opportunity afforded me by the kindness of Mr. Yarrell, to figure the egg of this species, although unable to accompany it with any desirable information.

The Brent Goose is said to breed like the other species in Northern Countries, making its nest as they do, in swamps and desolate places. Fig. 1.

ANAS ACUTA. (LINN.)

PINTAIL DUCK.

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THE Pintail Duck has not yet been discovered breeding in this Country, but retires with many more of our winter visitants, to more northern and less inhabited Countries, for that purpose; the nest is no doubt placed (as are those of all the species about which we know anything) in the near neighbourhood of standing or running water.







## XXIII.

### ANAS BOSCHAS. (LINN.)

#### COMMON WILD DUCK, MALLARD.

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THOUGH the larger proportion of the Mallards that visit us in winter retire farther north to breed, yet numbers of them remain in this country, throughout which they are widely dispersed; several of them resorting wherever large tracts of undisturbed water or marshy ground is to be met with (the little islands occurring in the midst of such, being their particular choice); a single pair sometimes frequenting small ponds and streams of water, when the margins afford cover of reeds or rushes, amongst which to make their nest; in open moorlands their eggs are frequently found in whins or heath. They have even been known to lay them in the hollow of decayed pollard trees, some feet high; Mr. Tunstall mentions one at Etchingham, in Sussex, which was found sitting upon nine eggs, on an oak tree, twenty-five feet from the ground, certainly a most strange deviation from their usual habits, and scarcely to be credited, were it not well attested. The nest is of grass, with a few feathers, in which are laid from ten to sixteen eggs. The young ones take to the water soon after they are hatched, but are a long time in arriving at maturity, during which they are most assiduously and affectionately attended, and guarded by the old bird, which will not allow itself to be driven from them, unless it can decoy its enemy away by that means.—Fig. 2.

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### ANAS CRECCA. (LINN.)

#### TEAL.

THE Teal also remains in this country to breed, though in a much smaller proportion than the last described; like it, it

frequents lakes and ponds, marshes, bogs, and heaths, but is of more retired habits, shunning more the abode of man ; it likewise makes its nest upon the ground amongst whins or heath, reeds, rushes, or long grass, of the latter of which it is chiefly composed, and is lined with feathers and its own soft down ; the eggs are from ten to twelve, as represented at Fig. 1, of the annexed Plate. Temminck, though usually very accurate, is quite under a mistake with regard to the eggs of this bird ; he describes them as “ of a rosy-white, indistinctly spotted with brown,” a character quite at variance with every species of this genus with which I am acquainted. Bewick commits a like mistake, but increases it by adding, “ that the eggs are of the size of a Pigeon’s,” taking his description, I suppose, from those of the Water-hen.



1



2





CXXIII.

ANAS QUERQUEDULA. (LINN.)

GARGANY DUCK.

---

THE Gargany commences laying its eggs about the middle of April. The nest which is composed of rushes and dried grass, mixed with the down of the bird, is placed upon the ground, in low boggy situations; among the coarse herbage and rushes in marshes, and on the borders of inland waters and rivers. The eggs are from eight to ten and vary but slightly, some having more or less of that colouring which may frequently be observed on the eggs of our poultry, and which is considered as a mark of superior breeding. Fig. 1.

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ANAS STREPERA. (LINN.)

GADWALL OR GREY DUCK.

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THE nest of the Gadwall, which is very similar to that of the Common Wild Duck, is built upon the ground in retired and marshy districts, amongst the rank aquatic herbage, and in the sedge and rushes which border inland pools and meres: the eggs are from ten to twelve in number. I have not yet heard of any well authenticated instance of either of the Ducks now described, having been found breeding in this Country, although I have little doubt that the Gargany at least, does, in some of the fenny districts. The eggs from which the drawings are made, were brought from Holland by Mr. J. D. Hoy, to whose kindness and liberality I am indebted for the accompanying information, together with a beautiful series of other rare eggs, some of which I little expected to have the pleasure of adding to this work.







*1860. 187. 1. 1860.*

*1860. 187. 1. 1860.*

## XCIV.

### ANAS CLYPEATA. (LINN.)

#### SHOVELER.

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THROUGH the unceasing ardour of my friend, Mr. John Hancock, I am enabled to give a drawing of the egg of the Shoveler: he had for some time suspected that it is a summer resident with us, and remained to breed in the neighbourhood of Newcastle; he therefore spared no pains to ascertain the fact, and had the satisfaction during the past summer, of receiving a nest and eggs from Prestwick Carr, a considerable extent of waste ground, covered with heath and furze—boggy, and intersected with drains—and having a piece of water near its centre. From hence, towards the end of May, a nest was brought to him, containing nine eggs; it was composed of grass, mixed with the down of the bird, and was placed in the middle of a whin bush, by which it was sheltered. Two or three weeks after this, a second nest was found at a short distance from the spot from which the other had been taken; it was constructed of the same materials, and similarly situated, and contained ten eggs: these were quite fresh, which led us to suppose that they belonged to the same bird which had been previously robbed. I have likewise received the egg of the Shoveler from Norfolk, from Mr. Salmon, found on the 10th of May, of the same year; the nest was amongst a quantity of green rushes, but without that profusion of feathers so generally observed in the nests of the Duck tribe; there being barely a sufficient quantity of dry grass, to keep the eggs from the sand: it contained eight eggs, which were within a few days of being ready to hatch—the nest was much exposed. We may therefore safely conclude, that the usual number of eggs, laid by the Shoveler, is eight or nine, and that ten is the greatest number; as those ob-

tained by Mr. Hancock had been covered by the bird for some days, and Mr. Salmon tells me, that a brood of young ones, observed by him in the Summer of 1834, contained only six young ones.—Plate XCIV. Fig. 1.

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ANAS PENELOPE. (LINN.)

WIGEON.

THROUGH the kindness of P. J. Selby, Esq. I have the pleasure of figuring the egg of another bird, added by his assiduity, during his visit to the North of Scotland, to the list of those which were before known to breed in this country. The Wigeon was previously said to remain here during the breeding season; and in several collections are eggs, supposed to be those of that bird: some of these I possess, but now that I have the means of comparing them with one presented to me by Mr. Selby, I have no doubt that they are those of the Teal only, being of the same size, whilst, as is seen by the plate, the egg of the Wigeon is much larger. By Mr. Selby I am also favoured with the following particulars of its discovery: “The nest, from which the eggs were taken, was upon an island in Loch Laighal, upon which is a large colony of the Lesser Black-backed Gull. It is covered with ferns and other long herbage, and the nest, well concealed in a thick bed of rushes, was composed of their decayed stems and other grasses, with a large quantity of the bird’s down interwoven; the eggs being far advanced, and the young nearly ready for exclusion. The female we shot, when she arose from the nest. Upon most of the Lochs were several pairs.” On many of the Norwegian fresh water lakes which we visited, especially those far inland, we observed several pairs of Wigeons, but, owing to the hurried manner in which we were compelled to pass over so large an extent of country, we did not succeed in finding one of their nests.





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LX.

ANAS CLANGULA. (LINN.)

GOLDEN-EYE-DUCK.

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THE eggs of a Duck were brought to us whilst in Norway by a boy, who said he had taken them from a hole in a tree; this surprised us a good deal, but far more so, when, upon going to the place, we found the hole was merely that of a Woodpecker, and so small that I should have thought it quite impossible for so large a bird to enter; it was about twelve feet from the ground, and about a foot in diameter inside; the entrance so narrow as hardly to admit the hand, and lined with the soft down of the bird. This we examined very closely, being exceedingly anxious to ascertain the species, and hoping to find some feather that might determine it, but in vain. The boy had told us, upon our first inquiries, that after having taken in succession five eggs from the nest, the bird had forsaken it. We had cross-questioned him in every way, and were about to give up our inquiries in despair, when it turned out that the absence of the poor bird was owing to his having taken it upon the nest, and carried it home to dinner. Thither we followed him, in hopes that some of the feathers might still exist, which, to our great joy, we found to be the case, together with the wings, and from them readily ascertained that our eggs were those of the Golden-eye-Duck, which is said by Linnæus to breed in trees; and is, I should imagine, the bird spoken of by Acerbi, in his travels through Sweden, which, he says, breeds abundantly on the river Tornea, in boxes erected by the natives for the reception of its eggs, and which he calls the Goosander.—Fig. 1, of the Plate, represents the egg of the Golden-eye-Duck, which is of a much deeper and brighter colour than those of the other species of *Anas* which I have seen.

ANAS GLACIALIS. (LINN.)

LONG-TAILED-DUCK.

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THE Long-tailed-Duck, like most of the genus, deserts us during the summer season, and repairs to more northerly countries to breed. We met with many whilst in Norway ; and although those which we shot and dissected had every appearance of being shortly about to breed, yet they were always in flocks, roving from place to place, and apparently unattached to any particular spot : sometimes sweeping past, within a few yards of us, with great rapidity, uttering their strikingly wild and most interesting cries. Several eggs of this bird were brought home by some of the officers of one of the Arctic expeditions ; for the one figured I am indebted to the liberality of my friend, Mr. G. C. Atkinson, who, during an excursion in Iceland, had the good fortune to meet with a nest of the Long-tailed-Duck ; it was placed near the margin of a small lake, and lined with the down of the female ; the eggs were six in number, but would, most probably, have been increased to ten or twelve, the usual number of this tribe of birds.



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## ANAS HISTRIONICA. (LINN.)

## HARLEQUIN DUCK.

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THE information of my friend, Mr. G. C. Atkinson, affords me an opportunity of correcting the errors into which ornithologists have fallen, regarding the eggs of the Harlequin Duck. Mr. Selby and Mr. Gould having stated that they are white; the former adding that they are not much larger than those of a Pigeon, a circumstance by no means likely.

The drawing is from some eggs in the Newcastle museum, obtained in Iceland by Mr. Atkinson; they were brought to him whilst at the Geysers, together with the bird, shot from the nest; he had afterwards himself also the satisfaction of finding a nest, containing either seven or eight eggs, deposited in a bed of the bird's down, upon the grass, bordering the margin of a shallow lake, and within a few yards of the nest of a Long-tailed Duck, which contained eleven eggs. The down in the nest of both of these birds, Mr. Atkinson remarks, is much more pure than that of the Eider Duck, and more free from those pieces of dried grass, mixed with the down of the latter.

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## ANAS SPECTABILIS. (LINN.)

## KING DUCK.

THE capture of one specimen only, in this country, gives the King Duck a place in the list of our British birds. It is abundant in Greenland and Spitzbergen; and, as stated by

Captain Sabine, equals in some places the numbers of the Eider Duck, which it resembles as much in habits as in its appearance. Its nest is, like that of the Eider Duck, lined with its own soft down; its eggs are also four or five in number, and of the same colour, but differing much more in their size than one would expect. The egg from which the accompanying drawing is made, was brought home by some one of the officers of one of the Arctic expeditions, and was kindly given me by Mr. Leadbeater. Plate 101. Fig. 2.







XV.

ANAS MOLISSIMA. (LINN.)

EIDER DUCK, ST. CUTHBERT'S DUCK.

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SEVERAL of this fine species breed annually upon the islands of the Northumberland coast, the Farne and Coquet islands, and begin to lay their eggs during the first week in June.

They appear to be particularly attached to the neighbourhood of some dwelling place or deserted building (no doubt for the sake of shelter), for upon the numerous Farne islands, though odd ones breed here and there, yet the bulk of them seem partial to one of them, where are the remains of an old light-house, around the walls of which we found about a dozen of their nests; some had even established themselves within, and under the roofs of the deserted rooms, where they were well protected from the weather. Upon the Coquet island also, twenty miles farther south, about the same number lay their eggs and rear their young ones against the walls and upon the low roof of an inhabited house, and so closely do they sit, that you may nearly touch them before they will leave their eggs;—thus completely is the roving wild nature of birds tamed and subdued at this season of the year by an uncontrollable and wonderful impulse.

Mr. Rennie is quite under a mistake when he says that their nests “are seldom if ever found on the shores of the main-land;” for in passing along the coast between Holy Island and the Farnes, in search of the holes in which the Sheldrake breeds, we accidentally met with several of their nests upon the links, or banks adjoining the sea-beach. In all these places there was abundance of grass; the foundation of the nests was consequently of this material, thickly lined with their own exquisitely soft down, amongst which the eggs lie, five in number, though it is not an unusual thing to find

ten in the same nest, the produce of two birds, which sit very amicably together. I brought home the down of one that had begun to sit, which was so thoroughly mixed with small pieces of the stalks of dry grass, that it must have been done purposely by the bird, probably to keep it better together, and would require a great time in picking it clean. It weighed one ounce and five-eighths, and when expanded filled my hat, though it was easily compressed within the hand. This is, however, no criterion of the quantity a nest may sometimes produce, as the birds, I believe, continue to increase it till the eggs are hatched; with this they are carefully covered whenever the old bird leaves them, for what purpose it is not easy to determine. Mr. Rennie says, "to keep them warm till her return," but I should be led much rather to attribute it to their wish of concealment, because in all the nests that I examined, containing one, two, or three eggs, upon which they had not then begun to sit, and in which there was consequently no warmth to lose, they were carefully covered with the surrounding herbage, pulled for the purpose in lieu of down, which, I suspect, is not plucked till the full number of eggs is laid.

The Eider Ducks breed also on the Western Isles of Scotland, and in such numbers in Iceland, that their down is made an article of commerce. Their nests are robbed by the natives two or three times successively, as long as the poor birds have any down left with which to line them, and when driven to extremity, it is said that the male supplies the deficiency. Von Troil states the quantity given by each Duck to be about half a pound during the season. This, however, appears to be a large estimate, when compared with the quantity afforded by those that breed upon our own coast, supposing the birds capable of giving the same quantity twice more: it may, however, be partly the effect of climate, animals being more thickly clothed in the northern regions. I shot one of the females from the nest, which I brought away, and found that

she was not above half stripped. In Hooker's *Tour to Iceland*, he says their nests were generally "among the old and half decayed sea-weed that the storms had cast high upon the beach, but sometimes only upon the bare rocks. It was difficult to make these birds leave their nests, and so little inclined were some of them to do it, that they even permitted us to handle them whilst they were sitting, without their appearing to be at all alarmed. Almost every little hollow place between the rocks is occupied with the nests of these birds, which are so numerous that we were obliged to walk with the greatest caution, to avoid trampling upon them; but besides this, the Stiftsamptman has a number of holes cut in the smooth and sloping side of a hill, in two rows, and in every one of these also there is a nest."

For the egg, see Plate 15.





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CLII.

ANAS FERINA. (LINN.)

POCHARD.

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A SMALL number of the Pochard remain during the summer months, and breed on the borders of the inland meres, so numerous in many parts of Holland.

The nest is placed amongst the rushes, or other coarse herbage abounding in those situations. The eggs vary in number, from ten to twelve. Fig. 1.

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ANAS MARILA. (LINN.)

SCAUP DUCK.

I HAVE no doubt that the Scaup Duck remains, in a few rare instances, to breed in this country, although its eggs have not hitherto been detected. We observed it during the month of May, upon some of the numerous pools of water which are interspersed over the Shetland Islands. The egg from which the drawing is copied was brought from Iceland, by Mr. Proctor, who found the nests placed amongst the loose stones, by the margin of the fresh water lochs. These were composed of the down of the female; the greatest number of eggs which they contained being eight. Fig. 2.

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ANAS FULIGULA. (LINN.)

TUFTED DUCK.

A VERY few pairs of the Tufted Duck are scattered, during the breeding season, among the inland waters of Holland,

and breed on their borders, amongst the thick cover which generally skirts them. They lay from eight to ten eggs. The great body of these birds certainly leave for northern countries; a very few only remaining in temperate climates, in some favourable localities.

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The kindness and perseverance of Mr. Hoy and Mr. Proctor have enabled me, ere the present completion of my work, to add Figures of the eggs of the three accompanying species. Those drawn at Figs. 1 and 3 were brought from Holland, by Mr. Hoy, from whom I received them, with the brief notices attached to each. ^







Illustration by H. H. Newton.

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## XLIH.

### PADORNA VULPANSER.

#### SHIELDRAKE.

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UNLIKE any other species of this tribe of birds with which I am acquainted, the Shieldrake deposits its eggs in holes, underground. It selects for that purpose the deserted burrows of rabbits, and makes its nest at various distances from the mouth of the hole, from three to six feet, sometimes even at a greater depth; the eggs are from ten to twelve in number, large, nearly round, and of a very smooth shell; the nest is composed of a small portion of dried grass, lined with the down of the birds. The only place where I have seen them during the breeding season is upon Holy Island, or Lindisfarne, and the low sandy banks there known by the name of links, which are nearly opposite to the island, and are one large rabbit warren.

This beautiful Duck forms one of the greatest ornaments on those lakes and pieces of water which occur in gentlemen's grounds; the eggs are, in consequence, eagerly sought after, and hatched for that purpose.

The plan pursued in order to discover the hole in which the eggs are laid, is by attaching a hook to the end of a long stick, and thrusting it successively into each till feathers are drawn out, and in this manner the eggs are likewise extracted.







## MERGUS MERGANSER. (LINN.)

GOOSANDER.

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THE egg of this species has been added to our collections, by the zeal of Mr. Proctor, the Curator of the Durham museum, who visited Iceland during the last spring, and penetrated alone to some of the most remote and least inhabited districts, enduring much hardship and privation, in the hope of adding to our Ornithological knowledge. In this he was fortunately, to a certain extent, successful; having procured a whole brood of the Iceland Falcon, together with eggs of the Little Auk, and several rare species of Ducks. The nests of the Goosander were placed amongst the loose stones and shingle, upon the borders of the fresh water lochs, and were formed of the down of the female bird. The eggs are from eight to twelve in number.

We had hoped during our visits to Norway, to have obtained the eggs of this species; especially when we frequently saw the birds, and sometimes in considerable flocks, around the shores of the beautiful inlets of the sea, and the numerous islands which we visited. These flocks were, with one or two exceptions only, composed of male birds; the partners of which we expected to find sitting their eggs, upon the neighbouring woody shores. We were, however, altogether unsuccessful in our search, although we closely explored many places similar to those in which we had found the eggs of the Red-breasted Merganser.

From the natives we could obtain no satisfactory information. They had never found the nest or eggs; but were convinced that the females were occupied in incubation in the country; and assured us that the males would be joined by them and their broods, towards the close of the breeding season.









## MERGUS SERRATOR. (LINN.)

## RED-BREASTED MERGANSER.

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MR. SELBY informs me, that he and Sir William Jardine found several nests of the Red-breasted Merganser near the margin of one of the lakes in the north of Scotland, the only instance of its breeding in this country, of which I have heard. It is one of the most common of the Duck tribe in Norway. We met with several of them in almost every Fiord, lake, and river, and few of the larger islands were without them; they prefer the neighbourhood of wood, and are most frequent, inland, upon the lakes and rivers, on the wooded borders and little islands of which they make their nests, placing them, for the most part, at the base of some young spruce fir, under the branches of which they are dry and sheltered. One of the nests which we found was, notwithstanding, upon an island, at some distance from the mainland, in a bleak and unsheltered situation; it was placed amongst the long grass, in a hole scooped in the earth, and forming a most perfect circle; it was just large enough to contain the eggs, six in number; the bird, however, sometimes lays as many as twelve; they are most commonly like the one figured, sometimes rather darker, and more inclining to green. Amongst the smaller birds which I have had an opportunity of frequently observing, I have remarked that they lay their eggs early in the morning. I was, therefore, surprised to find that two of the Red-breasted Mergansers which we shot contained hard eggs, ready for laying, as late as eleven o'clock in the forenoon.





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## XCH.

### PODICEPS MINOR. (LATH.)

#### LITTLE GREBE, DABCHICK.

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THE nest of the Little Grebe is placed by the side of lakes, ponds, and rivers. It is at times constructed of a large quantity of reeds, flags, and rushes, and the drier species of water plants; at other times, as in a nest kindly sent me by my friend Edward Kerrich, Esq. it is chiefly composed of mosses, and the soft green water weeds, mixed with an earthy substance, and thus imparting a colouring to the eggs immediately on their being deposited. The nest had become hard and dry, and would break into small fragments. Mr. Salmon has seen several composed of small pieces of green rushes, each piece about three or four inches long, and piled together to the height of about a foot above the surface of the water. The floating nests, mentioned by authors, if they have ever existed, must have become so, not by any design of the bird, but from the accidental drifting of their foundation from its moorings, occasioned by an unusual rise of the waters. None of the several nests examined by Mr. Salmon contained more than four eggs, although Montague says that they lay five or six. Over these a portion of the materials of the nest is carefully covered on the departure of the bird, to conceal them from observation; and, notwithstanding this precaution, Montague tells us that they are frequently destroyed by the Water Rat. The time of breeding of the Little Grebe is later than that of the Great Crested being about the middle of May.—  
Fig. 1.

## PODICEPS CRISTATUS. (LATH.)

### GREAT CRESTED GREBE, GREATER LOON.

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I HAVE again to acknowledge the kindness of my valued correspondent, Mr. Salmon, who, together with the eggs of the Crested Grebe, has obtained for me the following information relative to its habits, from the Rev. Richard Lubbock, of Norwich, which is highly interesting, especially that part of it relating to the facility of flight of the Great Grebe, in which Ornithologists have usually considered it so deficient. "The nest is often built in an exposed situation; the season of nidification early; the middle of April; so that the young reeds have hardly sprouted sufficiently to conceal the nest from any one who passes in a boat; yet the appearance of the whole is so like a decayed mass of water plants, swept together by the wind, as not to be easily distinguished by an unpractised eye. Great portion of the nest is under water; that which is above is conical in some degree, and on the top, in a slight cavity, are deposited the eggs, of a whitish colour by nature, but often so stained by the damps of the locality, as to present quite a different appearance. These eggs vary in number. I have seen nests with only three, all nearly hatched; four is a common number, and sometimes there are five, but one at least is generally addled, so that three young Loons are very commonly seen following the old one. The eggs are almost without an exception found covered with some fragments of rushes, flung carelessly over them, so as to conceal them.

The female, on being disturbed, leaves the nest by diving; no bird is seen, but a motion is discerned in the surrounding reeds like a pike making his way through them, but slower and more regular. I have removed the rushes flung over a nest in the morning, and found them replaced in the after-



noon. The female seldom rises within gun-shot of the nest, and if a boat be stationed to intercept her, will tack about and alter her course under water, without rising to breathe. These birds leave our broads in winter, especially if the weather is severe, and return with the first glimpse of sunshine in the spring, when they soon pair, and remain on the open water two and two, until the lengthening days incline them to build. Many people suppose that the Grebe can barely fly at all; on their first arrival in the spring, however, I have known them show nearly as much facility of flight as a wild fowl; I have seen them, when disturbed on one broad, rise and make their point for another pool two miles distant; but no sooner do they build a nest, than all their habits change, and they are the most skulking, diving, hiding, creatures possible: indeed, when a pool of water is much overgrown with reeds, you can hardly ever catch sight of them, even if several pairs are breeding around you. In 1833 I knew of five loons' nests upon a reedy pool, where I was in the habit of setting nets and trimmers, and, arguing from probability, there were other nests of which I knew nothing, yet until the young were hatched, I only twice caught sight of a Grebe."

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PODICEPS CORNUTUS. (LATH.)

HORNED GREBE, SCLAVONIAN GREBE.

THE egg of the Slavonian Grebe, from which the accompanying drawing is made, was brought home from Iceland by Mr. G. C. Atkinson, and is now in the Newcastle Museum. The nest, from which it was taken, was placed amongst some rushes above the surface of the water; it was formed, like those of the other species, of sedges, reeds, and other water plants; and contained four eggs of a pure bluish chalky white, having

been fresh laid, and yet unstained by the materials of the nest. There is a peculiarity of form in the eggs of the Grebes, which immediately distinguishes them from those of all other birds; they are widest in the middle, and taper so regularly towards each end, that it is not easy to distinguish that which is in other eggs the broadest. They are rarely seen of their natural and original purity; when first laid they are of a spotless chalky white, sometimes slightly tinted with blue, but by coming in contact with the materials of the nest, by which they are also covered on the departure of the bird, they soon assume a very different aspect, and become besmeared and thoroughly stained throughout with various shades of dirty green.



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## PODICEPS RUBRICOLLIS. (LATH.)

RED NECKED GREBE.  

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THE eggs of the Red Necked Grebe are described by Temminck as of a greenish white, clouded with deep brown: his description referring only to such specimens as have become soiled and stained by the materials of which the nest is composed. When first laid they are like the eggs of all the species of Grebes, of a pure white.

The Red Necked Grebe makes its nest, like the rest of the species, amongst the rushes and other herbage bordering the margin of fresh water lakes and ponds; the eggs are four or five in number. It has not yet been detected breeding in this country, but retires further north for that purpose. Fig. 1.

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## PODICEPS AURITUS. (LATH.)

## EARED GREBE.

AS far as we are acquainted with the habits of the Eared Grebe, it resembles those of the species with which we are more familiar. It breeds, like them, on the margins of ponds; and lays four or five eggs. Through the kindness of Mr. Yarrell I am enabled to figure the eggs of this and the preceding species.

I regret exceedingly that I am compelled, for the present, to rest satisfied with the vague notices which accompany the drawings of some of the eggs of the rarer birds. This should not have been the case had leisure permitted me to explore their own wild native haunts.







*Agave americana*, Linn.



## COLYMBUS GLACIALIS. (LINN.)

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER, LOON.

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I know of no instance of the Great Northern Diver having been detected breeding on the British islands, although I have little doubt that one or two pairs do breed annually amongst the numerous isles of Shetland, upon some of the many grassy uninhabited ones there, called holmes. Whilst on an excursion amongst them we frequently saw single birds, and, in one instance, came suddenly upon two together, one of which we shot. We could obtain no information from the natives, who, in consequence of never having been able to find their eggs, believe that they hatch them under their wings. A gentleman residing there told us that he had once seen an old bird accompanied by a young one. Like the other two species, they make no nest, but deposit their two eggs on the bare ground, close to the margin of the water: the one from which the accompanying drawing is made was brought home from one of the North American lakes, by Mr. John Laws, and is now in the collection of Mr. R. R. Wingate.

Mr. Audubon found the eggs in Labrador during his late arduous visit to that country.

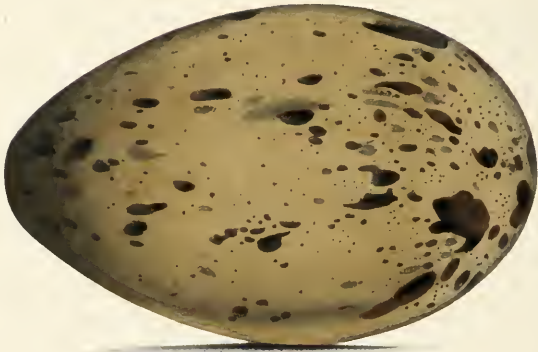




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Dr. J. W. Henshaw

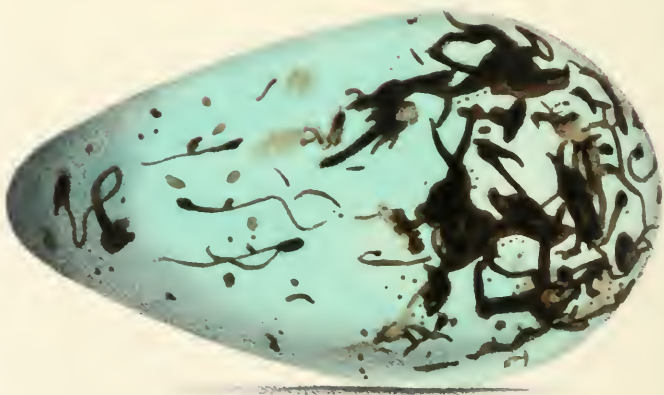
Day & Maguire Lithographers

and within a few feet of the water's edge ; they vary in the greener or browner hue of colouring, and in the closeness of the spots which commonly assume an oblong form, similar to that of the egg, and lengthened in the same direction with its greater diameter.

Their time of breeding is about the beginning of June.







1881

*no. 1000. 1000. 1000.*

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## URIA TROILE. (LATHAM.)

## COMMON OR FOOLISH GUILLEMOT, TARROCK.

No eggs are subject to a more singular and distinct variety than those of the Common Guillemot figured in the Plate—a variety so remarkable and striking, that no one, unless well acquainted with them, would believe them to be the eggs of the same species. The white varieties have, in consequence, long been, and are still, by many, considered as those of the Razor-bill, which they certainly resemble most closely in general appearance, although readily known by their being much narrower and more pointed at the smaller end, and by their greater length.

The two varieties figured, are of about equal occurrence; the white one much less frequently assumes the linear markings than the blue one, indeed, both of them are, for the most part, spotted only, many, much more so throughout, than Fig. 1 of the Plate; others inclining to green rather than blue, whilst one, which I have seen, is altogether white.

The Guillemot is an exceedingly abundant bird at most of the breeding places of sea-fowl upon our coast, animating the otherwise sombre and silent rocks, and covering with its brilliantly-coloured eggs the ledges of the perpendicular cliffs which dip into the sea. At the Fern islands they occupy a rock or stack (as such rocks are very appropriately called) which stands apart from the islands, and cover it so completely that at a short distance they have the appearance of a stratum of the stone; upon this the eggs are so close together that it is exceedingly difficult to move amongst them; the top of the rock is of a pure white from their dung, and upon this they have a peculiarly beautiful appearance. At a short distance is a low flat rock which a host of Cormorants have appropriated to their

own use ; and amongst the thickest ranks of these, a few Guillemots occasionally lay their eggs, having, when sitting upon them, a singularly ludicrous and pert appearance amidst their taller neighbours ; a place, both as to situation and company, very contrary to their usual habits. It is to me a matter of great wonder that their eggs are not swept altogether into the sea, by the severe gales of wind to which these unsheltered rocks are exposed. It has been supposed by some that there is a glutinous matter attached to them to keep them there, but this is certainly not the case with the many which I have handled on the spot. When coming unexpectedly upon the birds, I have observed several of the eggs precipitated into the sea in their too hasty retreat ; many of the ledges of rock on which they are laid, are barely wide enough to hold them, and yet here the young ones are to be hatched, and to be brought up ; many of them must undoubtedly be destroyed. To any one who can derive pleasure from observing the habits of birds, and seeing them in their own wild native haunts, one of their larger breeding-places must afford a pleasure which few things can give. I shall never forget the sensations of delight with which I have myself witnessed some of those in Shetland ; the wild magnificence of the rocks alone was sufficient to excite feelings of the most intense enjoyment, and far more so, when peopled with tens of thousands of these interesting beings, covering their dark and barren sides from the sea to upwards of a thousand feet above you, each species occupying its own particular part : the Kittiwakes beginning at a few feet from its surface, the Guillemots and the Razor-bills succeeding, and, above them, the Greater and Lesser Back-backed and Herring Gulls : the multitudes passing around you in their busy flight contrasting finely with each other, from the slow, majestic soar of the Greater Black-backed Gull, to the rapid, short-winged, bustling flight of the Puffin ; the various mingled cries of the different species, the loud bark

of the Greater Black-backed Gull, the distinctly repeated cry which has given its name to the Kittiwake, and, occasionally, as something unusual seemed to pervade the dense rows of Guillemots, a loud, hoarse murmur, resembling the cheering of some distant multitude, together with the motion of the freshening sea, and the beating of the surge against the rocks, all contributed to render this one of the finest scenes in nature.

Whilst upon its egg, the Guillemot will remain so stupidly seated (and from this circumstance it has probably derived its name of foolish Guillemot) as to allow a noose, at the end of a long stick, to be passed over its neck; and by this means immense numbers of them are annually taken by the inhabitants of the island of St. Kilda, who subsist almost entirely on sea birds; an interesting account of their mode of capturing the different species has been given by Mr. G. C. Atkinson, in the *Transactions of the Natural History Society of Newcastle*.

The Guillemot lays one egg only, towards the end of May or beginning of June; it is amazingly large; one which I have seen exceeds those on the Plate very considerably in size, and measures in length, over the surface of the egg, 5 inches, being  $\frac{1}{6}$ ths more than those figured, and in circumference  $7\frac{1}{4}$  inches, or,  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inch more. The size of the Guillemot's egg is more striking when compared with that of other birds.

The weight of the bird is about 24 ounces, that of its egg\* 3 ounces 7 drams.

The weight of the large egg mentioned above is 5 ounces 7 drams 40 grains.

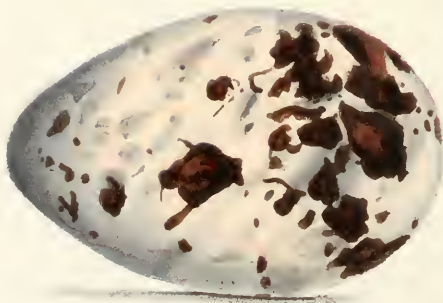
The weight of the Common Crow is 19 ounces, that of its egg is only 5 drams 49 grains.

The weight of the Ring Dove is 20 ounces, that of its egg 5 drams 30 grains.

\* The above weights are not the correct weights of the fresh egg, but merely of the shell filled with water; they, however, answer the same purpose for comparison.







## URIA GRYLLE. (LATHAM.)

BLACK GUILLEMOT, TYSTE.

---

THE seas of Shetland are everywhere enlivened by these pretty birds; great numbers of them breeding amongst the rocks round which they flow; they likewise breed in the Orkneys and Western isles of Scotland, but are not, to my knowledge, met with farther south; though Montagu says, that a few of them breed in Wales, near Tenbigh; they make no nest, but lay their eggs, which are always two in number, in such situations as the place affords. On some of the islands which present a steep precipice to the sea, they make use of holes or crevices in the rocks in which the eggs are laid at various depths, from one or two feet (which is the most usual), to three or four; on other islands less precipitous, it deposits them in cavities under or between fragments of rock and large stones, with which the beach is strewed; in one situation several pairs rear their young ones in crannies between stones, forming an old wall on the top of a single rock at sea, and at an elevation of fifty or sixty feet above its surface. The Black Guillemot is not nearly so expert a diver as the Razor-bill or Common Guillemot, and when disturbed usually takes to flight, passing very close to the surface of the water; it is, however, strong upon the wing, and rises with ease to the precipices where it nestles; its feet, when alive, are very beautiful, being of the purest bright coral red; it resorts annually to the same holes, which were well known by the boys that accompanied me in search of their eggs, who went immediately to the places where they had taken them in previous years, and were commonly successful in again finding them; it is rather later in its time of incubation than the Common Guillemot, Razor-bill, or

Puffin. I obtained two of their eggs on the 6th of June, but the generality of them were not laid before the 15th or 16th of the same month, when I had the satisfaction of examining about seventy specimens, then nearly all fresh laid; amongst so many I was surprised to find so little variation; of Figures 2 and 3 of the Plate, the former of which is a very singular variety, I only met with two each; the rest bear the general appearance of Fig. 1; about one-half of them differing from it only, in the ground-colour being white instead of blue, the spots most commonly smaller, and more regularly disposed; a few are more sparingly, and others more closely and minutely marked; they resemble the eggs of the Razor-bill much more than those of the Common Guillemot, both as to shape and character, so much so, that any one forming a classification of birds by their eggs, which might generally be done with great and admirable accuracy, would, in this instance, be led into error. The Tyste (by which name it is known throughout Shetland) sits very close, and is easily caught upon its eggs; it frequents, and seems very partial to, those still, deep inlets of the sea there so numerous, in which the water is so beautifully clear, that I have observed them, though two or three hundred feet above them, using their wings in diving, and, as it were flying under water, as distinctly as though I had seen them skimming over its surface.







## ALCA TORDA. (LINN.)

RAZOR-BILL.  

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LIKE the Guillemot, the Razor-bill breeds upon high rocks, and, like it, lays only one egg ; it has, as I have before stated, often been confounded with white varieties of the eggs of the Guillemot, from them it is, however, very readily known, as the plate will show ; it is less, much shorter, and rounded at the smaller end, and is less apt to vary and run into the same curious varieties. The egg figured is of an intermediate size. The Razor-bill breeds abundantly at Flambro' Head, on the Western islands, the Orkneys, and the Shetland islands.





1



2



## ALCA IMPENNIS. (LINN.)

## GREAT AUK.

---

WE know little further with regard to the Great Auk, than that it is an inhabitant of more northern regions than ours, and that it has become entitled to a place on our list of Birds by having been once captured within the limits of the British Islands. It breeds, like the Guillemot, on the ledges of those precipitous rocks which overhang the sea, resorting to high latitudes during the season of incubation.

The egg, which it will be seen, very closely resembles that of the Guillemot, is from the collection of Mr. Yarrell.—Fig. 1.

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## MERGULUS MELANOLEUCOS. (RAY.)

## LITTLE AUK. ROTCHE.

ALTHOUGH a more frequent visitant of our shores at other seasons, the Little Auk is, like the preceding species, an inhabitant of polar regions during the season of incubation. It is then abundant on some of the shores of Greenland, from whence specimens are brought home by the sailors employed in the whale fishery. The only egg which I have seen, is in the possession of Mr. Gibson, of North Shields, who obtained it from one of the Greenland ships. The colouring is very slight, and is probably faded from exposure to the light. A drawing of the egg sent me by Mr. Yarrell is more tinted with blue, which I have no doubt will be the case with fresh specimens.









## MORMON FRATERCULA. (TEMM.)

PUFFIN, TOMMY NODDY, OR NORIE, SEA PARROT,  
COULTER NEB, &c.

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THIS very singular bird breeds on various parts of our coasts, and in various situations. A few of them resort annually to one of the Ferne islands, on the Northumberland coast, where they lay their eggs in some old rabbit burrows, now thickly overgrown with rich grass. In the Shetland islands, where they breed in immense multitudes, they have in some places taken up their abode high above the ocean in clefts, and crevices of the cliffs, or in horizontal holes in the softer intervening strata, no doubt made by themselves, to the formation of which their most curious and powerful bills seem fully adequate; in another place, where probably the cliffs do not offer the same accommodation, they occupy a grassy slope that occurs midway in the precipice, with fragments of which (falling from above) it is strewed, and under and amongst these they rear their young ones.

They are here, in such numbers, that when viewed from above at an elevation of three or four hundred feet, they have the appearance of a swarm of bees, scarcely looking larger than that insect; and, though in their hurried and unceasing flight to and fro, they present to our sight all the same apparent bustle and confusion, yet, like them, they are performing with admirable precision, and in beautiful order, that one unchanging part allotted to them in the great chain of this wonderful creation.

The Puffin lays one egg, of a dirty white, mostly marked with various tints of colour, but so very faint and indeterminate as to appear as though they were seen through the shell, and proceeded from the inside like those marks frequently

observed on white eggs, occasioned by pieces of the yolk sticking to the shell. The egg figured is a pretty example of the species, and is more spotted than common ; it is very difficult to procure good specimens, and unless they are taken quite fresh they become stained and dirtied throughout, in the same manner as the eggs of the Grebes, and cannot afterwards be cleaned. The nest, when any, which is only sometimes the case, is composed of a small quantity of grass placed in a hole at the depth of two or three feet. The bird sits very closely, allowing itself to be caught upon its nest ; of this I have frequently had very feeling experience when seeking for its eggs, and after trying various holes to no purpose, have, at last, had notice of my success, by the no means pleasant gripe of its sharp and powerful beak with which it lays so strong a hold of your finger as to allow itself to be drawn out by it. Its time of beginning to breed is the first week in June.





## SULA BASSANA. (BRISS.)

## SOLAN GOOSE, GANNET.

---

THE Solan Goose breeds together in great numbers, and is confined to four localities upon the British coast. Ailsa Crag, in the Frith of Clyde, Souliskerry, near the Orkneys, the Bass Rock, in the Frith of Forth, which it entirely whitens with its numbers, and the far St. Kilda, where, with various other sea birds, it forms the almost entire food of the poor inhabitants, who capture it while seated on the nest by means of a hair noose; this being fastened to the end of a long stick, is slipped over the head of the bird, which is drawn off its legs, and soon strangled: thousands of the sea birds thus caught are either eaten whilst fresh, or dried for winter store.

The weather had been stormy, and the long unbroken swell of the Western Ocean, which met us as we got sight of the lonely isle, was everywhere enlivened by multitudes of Gannets, which were either winging their way home or buoyantly topping each succeeding wave. The Shearwater Petrel too, which was skimming with great rapidity over the surface of the water, following the rise and fall of every billow, added an interesting wildness to the scene.

It was all we saw of the feathered tribes of this lonely spot; when we reached the island every wing was motionless. It was night, and the full moon was throwing its bright light upon those rocks, which, though now apparently bare and deserted, would again on the morrow swarm with life.

We were to have spent a day amongst the islands, but in consequence of our steam boat having been delayed two days in the Sound of Harris by bad weather, our captain was

compelled to summon us on board after a short visit to the inhabitants.

There everything betokened the carnage of our friends; mud houses, the public store rooms of the village, were filled with dried birds. Large packages of feathers were in every house, the coin with which they pay their rents, and loose feathers, birds' wings, and bones, were everywhere strewed around thick and deep; the lamps which they were burning were too supplied with oil from the Fulmar Petrel. I regretted much the necessity of leaving a place abounding with interest, and which it had been for years my ambition to visit. The Solan Goose takes its food, the small herring sprats, in the same manner as the various species of Tern, by precipitating itself headlong into the water. I have many a time beheld with amazement a number of the Gannets thus pounce down so closely after each other, and so nearly into the same place, that it seemed almost impossible that they should avoid doing each other an injury, many remaining emersed at the same time. At their great breeding places before-mentioned, they build their nests upon every shelf or projecting ledge of rock which offers itself on the steep sides of the precipices. It is formed of a considerable quantity of sea weed and dry grass, upon which is deposited the single egg, which when first laid is of a pure white, the harder shell being covered over outside with a coating of a chalky substance.





1



2



## CARBO CORMORANUS. (MEYER.)

CORMORANT.

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THE Cormorant breeds upon ledges of precipices, choosing, however, in preference, those rocks which stand isolated and surrounded by the sea, upon the tops of which it makes its nest. On the Ferne islands, where about forty or fifty pairs breed, they occupy a low flat island, slightly elevated above the water, confining themselves to one particular and very limited part of it. To any one who takes a delight in exploring the retreat of our sea-fowl, and visiting them on their own wild native rocks, a breeding place of the Cormorant, will afford one of the most interesting, and, at the same time, ludicrous sights; and, were Cruikshank an ornithologist, would furnish him with some good sketches. Should you approach the Cormorant islands to leeward, you will long, ere you reach it, have notice of its neighbourhood, by the strong nauseous smell tainting the passing breeze. At first sight, the island, which is whitened with their dung, resembles the limed top of a wall, in which are stuck pieces of broken glass; when, on a nearer approach, the lank upright figures of the birds become visible, they look like an assemblage of so many long-necked French wine bottles. Before you arrive within gun-shot of their nests, after raising their long necks to their utmost perpendicular stretch, and looking wildly around them, they suddenly assume a horizontal position, and leaving their nests, pass around you once or twice, and then retire to some neighbouring rock, where they remain for a time quietly seated, and then, as though impatient of your delay, again rise and wheel round you as before. A flock of Cormorants, thus on wing, is a most curious sight.—

On landing, it is by no means easy to obtain a sure footing ; the rock is entirely covered with their dung, and is very slippery, and intolerably fœtid. The nests, which are placed at short distances from each other, are large, and, in some instances, singularly lofty, measuring upwards of two feet in height ; they are composed of a large quantity of the coarser sea weeds, and lined with finer weeds and dry grass ; their eggs are four or five in number, the outer surface of which is soft and white, discovering, in places where it is deficient, a hard shell, of a blueish-green colour ; it is easily scraped off with a knife.—Plate LXXIV., Fig. 1.

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### CARBO GRACULUS. (MEYER.)

#### SHAG, GREEN CORMORANT.

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IN its habits and nidification the Shag greatly resembles the Cormorant ; it differs from it in preferring for its nest the ledges and apertures on the face of some lofty cliff ; it is, too, less sociable, and may be seen here and there perched upright upon its nest, and sometimes only a few yards above the sea ; at other times upwards of a hundred feet high, and generally in places exceedingly difficult of access. I have many times, when climbing for its eggs, been sadly tempted by seeing them within a few yards of me without a possibility of obtaining them ; they are like those of the Cormorant outwardly, of a soft chalky substance, which is easily rubbed off, leaving a hard greenish shell beneath ; when fresh laid, they are white ; they are, however, usually seen daubed all over with dirty green, with which they are stained by the sea-weed very soon after they are laid, in the same manner

as those of the different species of Grebes are soiled ; the eggs of the largest of which (the *Cristatus*) they very much resemble ; they are four or five in number.

The nest is formed of a considerable quantity of sea-weed, lined with the finer species and dry grass. The eggs of the Cormorant and Shag are singularly beautiful, being of the most brilliant green.





CXXV.



castone by W. C. Harrison

Day & Haghe Lithrs



## STERNA CASPIA. (PALLAS.)

CASPIAN TERN.  

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THE Caspian Tern is a rare British Bird, and though little is known of its habits, there is no doubt that they bear a close resemblance to those of the other species, to the eggs of which, those of the Caspian Tern are very similar. It is said to make no nest, depositing its eggs either upon the bare rock, or in some slight depression on the sea-beach, they are two or three in number.

For this rarity, I am also indebted to the collection of Mr. Yarrell.







#### IV.

### STERNA CANTIACA (GMEL.)

#### SANDWICH TERN, OR SEA SWALLOW.

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NOTHING can exceed the beauty and variety of the eggs of the Sandwich Tern: in a visit to the Coquet and Farne islands, on the Northumberland coast, I had the pleasure of picking those selected for the accompanying plate, from many hundreds which lay thickly strewed on all sides of us, mixed with those of the common Tern (*Sterna Hirundo*): indeed, so close were they together, that, in many instances, we were obliged carefully to pick our steps, in order to avoid treading upon them; they were either upon the grass as it grew, or upon a small quantity gathered together for that purpose. They are mostly two, sometimes three in number.

A more interesting sight than the above can scarcely be imagined: the rocks around us, for the greatest part of the year, bleak, silent, and uninhabited, were now everywhere ornamented with the eggs, and enlivened by the constant (I had almost said, musical,) cry of these neat and elegant birds, which were soaring over our heads in thousands.

The three figures are varieties only, and certainly very remarkable ones, of the same species; the first shewing the usual contour.

The Sea Swallow breeds late, as do most of the sea birds; the female does not, generally, begin to sit till June. I have always found the first week in that month the best time to obtain fresh specimens of the eggs of the sea fowl.









### CIII.

## STERNA HIRUNDO. (LINN.)

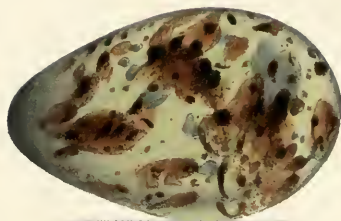
### COMMON TERN.

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WITH this species, the Arctic Tern had long been confounded, till their true distinctions were pointed out by Mr. Selby. The *Sterna artica* is really the Common Tern of the north of England, the *Sterna Hirundo* being comparatively rare; nor was I at all aware of its breeding in any of the northern counties until I received its eggs, and the following communication, from Mr. Heysham. "The Common Tern breeds near the western extremity of Rochcliff salt marsh, at no great distance from the junction of the rivers Eden and Esk, in Solway Frith. This is the only locality they resort to in this district, to my knowledge, with the exception of a few pairs which breed, I believe, almost every year on Solway Moss. In some seasons they commence to lay their eggs about the latter end of May, and fresh ones may be obtained until the beginning of July." This species usually makes little or no nest, laying its eggs, which are three in number, upon the bare grass or sand. It is, I believe, the only abundant species on the southern coast of England.







## STERNA DOUGALLI. (MONT.)

ROSEATE TERN.  

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I am not aware that the Roseate Tern is ever met with so abundantly as others of the genus. Upon the Fern and Coquet islands, the only places where I have myself had the pleasure of seeing them, they are very limited in number, consisting of a few pairs only, mixed and associating with the numerous flocks of Arctic and Sandwich Terns, from the many thousands of which it is by no means easy to distinguish them; their eggs are, likewise, laid amongst those of the other species, and so much resemble large oblong varieties of the eggs of the Arctic Tern, that the only means of ascertaining them with certainty is by watching the bird settle upon them. They seem, however, from the specimens I have examined, to be more constantly of a light colour, and more covered with minute dots than the eggs of the other Terns; most of the specimens much more so than Fig. 2; whilst Fig. 1, possessing more of the Tern-like character, is of rare occurrence. I have a variety, the larger end of which is encircled by a beautiful zone of deep brown and purple spots. The eggs are two or three in number.





## XIX.

### STERNA ARCTICA. (TEMM., SELBY.)

#### ARCTIC TERN, SEA SWALLOW.

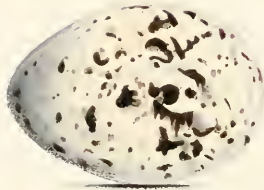
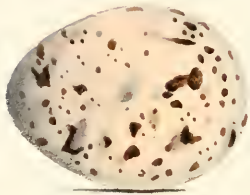
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THE Arctic Tern is by far the most abundant of the genus, and breeds in great numbers upon the Farne and Coquet islands, on the latter, especially, in conjunction with the Sandwich Tern. The two species seem to be exceedingly sociable, and, though they breed together, as it were, and appear mixed, yet, in passing over the island and examining the many hundreds of eggs there deposited, in order to obtain the greatest possible number of varieties, I found that they were generally in small distinct groups; the number of eggs, I think, could not be short of two thousand, and laid within a small space, being confined to one side of the island, which is altogether only three or four acres in extent. Though fine gravelly sand seems to be their favourite resort, these eggs were all deposited upon the grass, (their being no other surface on the island,) where they had usually scratched a slight hole, and lined it with a small portion of fine dry grass. They lay two or three eggs, as in Plate XIX. The first two figures show the prevailing hue, figure 3, one that is less common, but of all the eggs with which I am acquainted, none is more subject to constant and remarkable variety than this; no one seeing them compared, could have the least idea that they belonged to the same species; in the ground colour they differ from a pure spotless white to the deep olive of fig. 2; some are marked throughout with small obscure spots, whilst others are encircled, near the larger end only, with dark brown. It is quite impossible to give any idea of these by description.—I would propose during the progress of the work to draw another plate of the eggs of this, as well as of the Sandwich Tern. The time of their breeding commences the first or second week in June.









## STERNA MINUTA. (LINN.)

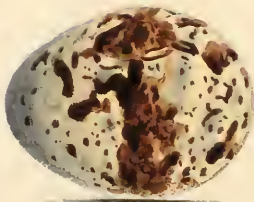
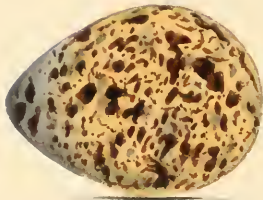
## LESSER TERN, OR SEA SWALLOW.

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THE eggs of the Lesser Tern are by no means so variable as those of the rest of the genus, nor are they so easily met with; the bird being much less common, and, as far as I have had the means of observing, very local during the period of incubation. The only place on the Northumberland coast where they have yet been ascertained to breed, being a small space of gravelly sand nearly opposite to Holy Island, where about thirty or forty pairs annually resort, choosing small patches of gravel upon which to lay their eggs, and making only a slight hollow in the sand for their reception; they are sometimes two, but most commonly three, in number. In a ramble along the coast, during the last summer, with the Messrs. Hancock (to whom I am indebted for much assistance in the present work), we had the pleasure of finding, at the above-mentioned place, between twenty and thirty nests of this bird, within the circuit of a few yards.—It was the first week in June, the time in which I have for some years obtained their eggs. Figures 1 and 2, of the Plate, show the usual character, differing only in the depth of colour. Fig. 3 is a variety not often met with.







## XLVIII.

### STERNA NIGRA. (LINN.)

#### BLACK TERN OR CAR SWALLOW.

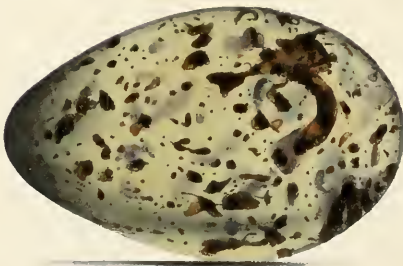
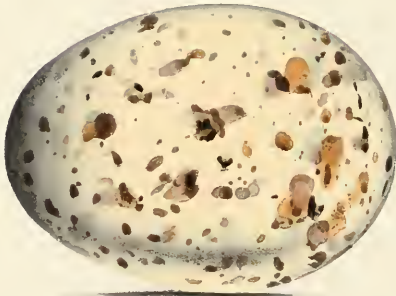
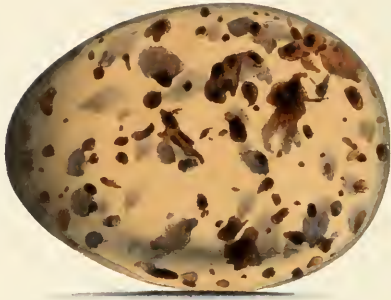
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The Black Tern breeds in considerable numbers in the flat marshy counties of Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire, and though in other respects so closely allied to the other species of Terns, it differs from them a good deal in its nidification. Whilst all the other species seek the immediate neighbourhood of the sea, and choose those places which are the most free from moisture, and lay their eggs frequently upon the arid sand, the Black Tern prefers inland marshes and pools of water, laying its eggs upon tufts of rushes and grass, sometimes in very wet situations, and barely raised above the surface of the water. Its nest is composed of flags and coarse grass; its eggs are sometimes three, most commonly four, in number, differing likewise in this respect from the other species, none of which I have ever known to lay more than three. I am indebted to the liberality of J. D. Salmon, Esq., for a large series of the eggs, from which the three figures in the plate are selected, as affording the most opposite varieties; they were taken by him with many more off Crowland Wash, in Lincolnshire, where immense numbers of the birds annually breed towards the end of May or beginning of June.









*Small text, likely a species name or description, partially illegible.*

*Small text, likely a species name or description, partially illegible.*

## LARUS RIDIBUNDUS. (LINN.)

BLACK-HEADED GULL.

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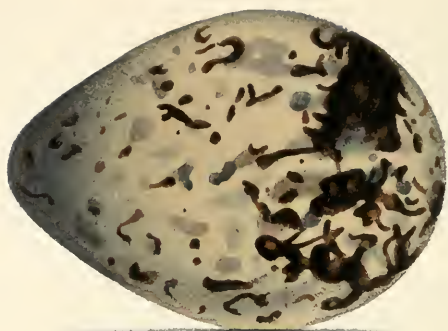
DIFFERING in its habits from the rest of the genus, the Black-headed Gull leaves the sea-shore on the approach of the summer season, and repairs inland to breed; frequenting the margins of marshy grounds, or whitening with its numbers the shores of some of the smaller lakes and ponds.

The most numerous colony which I have seen occupy a piece of water upon the estate of A. Askew, Esq. at Pallinsburn, in Northumberland, adding an unceasing and ever moving interest to the grounds which nothing else could give, their pure and spotless colours contrasting finely with the surrounding scenery. Here meeting with protection, they have become exceedingly numerous, and though within a few yards of the high road are undisturbed by its vicinity. In most of their breeding places they are less fortunate, and are plundered of their eggs without mercy, in consequence of their being very good to eat, and without that fishy taste which the eggs of other sea birds have, more or less; the food of the Black-headed Gull being at this time of the year chiefly confined to worms, slugs, &c. When thus robbed of their eggs they are induced to lay two or three times; the eggs, as Mr. Salmon informs me, decreasing each time in size. Of these second and third layings he has kindly sent me specimens, some of which are one third less than the usual and natural size, the consequence of a forced and unnatural influence upon those strong instinctive feelings and desires of propagating their species, which the Creator has implanted in the animal world.

If we adopt the opinion of some naturalists, that the ovarium of a bird contains from its creation all the eggs which it is to lay through life, then how soon must these persecuted Gulls be rendered barren and unproductive? perhaps even before they have once had the pleasure of bringing up a family of young ones.

The nest of the Black-headed Gull is built upon the ground, of dried grass loosely put together, and contains three eggs, differing much in shape, colour, and marking, as the accompanying Plate will show. It begins to breed towards the end of April or early in May.





## LARUS CANUS. (LINN.)

COMMON GULL.  

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THIS Gull is by no means so common upon the English coast as several of the other species ; it breeds on some of the Western Isles, and is met with, although few in number, on many of the smaller grassy islands in Shetland ; it lays its eggs, which are three, sometimes, upon the grass, at other times upon the rock ; when in the former situation, its nest is very slight, consisting of a small portion of dry grass ; on the latter, it is commonly of a greater quantity of materials. The eggs figured in the Plate, which were selected whilst in Norway, from upwards of two thousand that had been gathered for the use of the inhabitants, from one island only, are not chosen, because they present the most singular varieties ; but to give the best idea of the general colouring ; of this, Figs. 1 and 3 are specimens ; Fig. 1 being given for its shape, which is of unusual occurrence ; Fig. 3 is, however, rather darker than common ; Fig. 2, one of those striking varieties of which I possess an interesting and most singular series, some so nearly like those of the Oyster Catcher, as not to be distinguished from them, except in size, some covered throughout with minute dots, others of every shade of colour, from white to the deep brown of Fig. 3.









Drawn of Stone by W. C. Hewitt.

Ray & Haghe Lith<sup>rs</sup> to the King

KITTIWAKE.

---

THE nest of the Kittiwake is at all times difficult of access; placed as it is upon the slightest jutting ledge of rock on the face of the most perpendicular precipices, washed or surrounded by the sea; it is formed of a considerable quantity of dry grass and pieces of sea-weed, and were it not for a mixture of clay giving it weight and adhesion, it would be impossible for the eggs or young ones to escape destruction. The Kittiwake breeds in great numbers on various parts of our coast, and is exceedingly abundant on some of the Shetland islands, especially on the rocks of Unst, the northern termination of our country. We left Buraforth, a fishing station, belonging to Mr. Edmonston, and the most northerly residence on the British islands, anxious to explore them; passing down a narrow forth on our way to the open sea, thousands of Kittiwakes glided past us, fishing as they went along; these were, however, but a scattered few of the amazing multitudes that crowded round us when we reached their breeding places; the rocks to a great extent were whitened with their numbers; the sea was spangled far and wide with their snow-white breasts, and equal numbers floated anxiously above our heads, plaintively pronouncing their clearly articulated cry of "Kittiwake." Many of them would come fearlessly within a few feet of the boat, and would hover stationary over our heads, and so near that we could examine every feather; thousands were, likewise, seated upon their nests close above us, and occupying with them every projecting ridge of rock. The whole scene was indescribably wild and delightful. I had taken up my abode at the fishing station to enjoy its magnificence, and had strolled along the

edge of the precipitous cliffs, which we had the day before seen from below, when suddenly everything was enveloped in a dense mist, which partially clearing now and then, opened to my view far below the strangely busy scene of yesterday. Sauntering along, and ignorant of the direction of my way homewards, I observed immense numbers of the Kittiwake passing over my head inland, and being curious to know their object, I followed in their route and soon met equal crowds returning, each carrying a piece of fish.—Knowing that they must have been to the harbour for these (the pieces cast away in preparing the fish for salting), I gladly kept company with my friends, and reached my home by the shortest possible route. A storm was beginning, and the sea was running very high, they had, therefore, adopted this short cut to their feeding place in preference to the circuitous course of the forth, where we had met them yesterday.

The Kittiwake begins to breed towards the latter end of May, and lays three eggs, differing exceedingly in colour and marking; a variety, having a very beautiful zone of spots towards the larger end, is more prevalent than amongst the eggs of almost any other bird.





CXLVIII.

LARUS GLAUCUS. (BRUNN.)

GLAUCOUS GULL.

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THE only specimen of the egg of the Glaucous Gull preserved in the cabinets of this country, which is in the collection of Mr. Leadbeater, of London, was brought home by one of the Arctic expeditions of discovery.

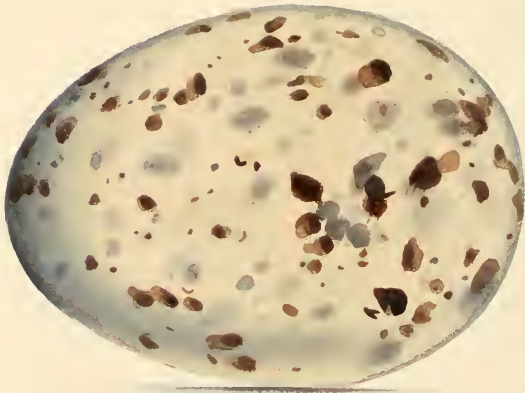
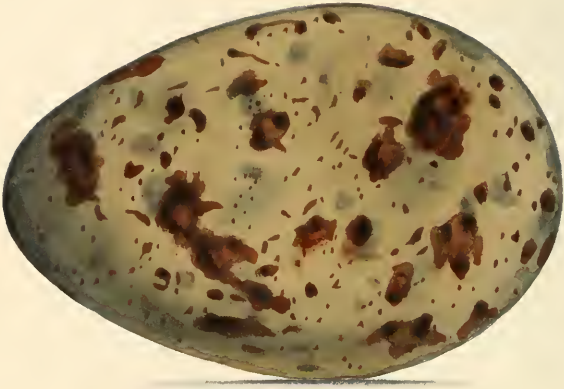
It much resembles eggs of most of the other Gulls, and would not readily be known from varieties of the Greater and Lesser Black-backed and Herring Gulls.

Dr. Richardson describes the Glaucous Gull as a common species in Greenland, Baffin's Bay, and the Polar Seas, where it breeds, upon the precipitous rocks which form that coast.









*Quail Egg*

*Quail Egg*

## LARUS ARGENTATUS. (LINN.)

HERRING GULL.

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THE eggs of the Herring Gull are so exceedingly similar to those of the Lesser Black-backed Gull, that were a number of them mixed together it would be impossible, except in a very few instances, to separate those of the different species. The only characteristic distinction that I have been able to detect after examining a number of each, is, that the eggs of the Herring Gull are occasionally marked with larger blotches of colour than those of the Lesser Black-backed, and resemble the one figured in the Plate. In places where a choice of situation offers, the Herring Gull seems to prefer those ledges of rock and small patches of grass which sometimes occur on the sides of precipices; its nest is also found on the flat surface of rocks or grassy islands; it is usually somewhat larger than that of the Lesser Black-backed Gull, and composed of the same materials, rough grass, with pieces of the sod attached, and intermingled with bits of sea-weed. The time of breeding is towards the end of May; the number of eggs three; they breed abundantly on various parts of our coast, on the fine cliff of Sumburgh Head the southern termination of Shetland, on the Isle of Wight, and on the Fern islands, but very sparingly.

To the Rev. W. D. Fox, who also supplied me with a series of their eggs, I am indebted for the following very interesting account of one of these birds. At Colbourne, on the Isle of Wight, a Herring Gull made his escape about thirty years ago from a garden where he had been kept a prisoner. From that time, however, to the present, he has returned all but daily to visit the place of his former captivity, though at the distance of six or seven miles from the part of the coast

where they resort. Here he is regularly fed, and is so tame with the man who has long attended to his wants, that he will eat out of his hand, but will not allow any further familiarities. In the breeding season he is accompanied by his mate who will not venture to descend, but remains hovering and screaming over him whilst he is feeding below.

Interesting as this trait in the life of a wild sea bird is in itself, it is doubly so as affording a clue, by which we may to a certain extent ascertain the length of life of a Sea-gull, and as adding a fact to our very scanty knowledge regarding the age to which birds arrive.





QUAIL EGG

QUAIL EGG

## LARUS MARINUS. (LINN)

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL.

---

THE Great Black-backed Gull (besides a few localities on the English and Scottish coasts) breeds in abundance on the Orkney and Shetland Islands, but is confined to a few of them; originating in the care with which it selects one that is difficult of access, either from the precipitous nature of its rocky sides, or from being surrounded by the waters of some inland lake, where no boat has ever been; such as the former is the Island of Noss, in Shetland, and though only at the distance of a few feet from an adjoining one had always been considered inaccessible, till, stimulated by a desire to procure the numerous eggs which covered its grassy top, and which could be seen from the neighbouring cliffs, a peasant succeeded in climbing to its summit, and when there of making fast a rope conveyed from the opposite rock, and thus establishing a communication for after years, the benefit of which he, poor fellow, never lived to see, being killed in his descent. This communication still exists in the shape of a double rope, which being passed through holes in the side of a large box, it is suspended and easily drawn over to the opposite side; and after the eggs are all carried off, sheep are conveyed across to pasture on the rich grass produced by the dung of the birds. When we were there it had not yet been put in readiness for that year's use; we had not therefore the satisfaction of enjoying so novel a bird-nesting excursion.

The Great Black-backed Gull makes a nest of a quantity of dried grass, carelessly heaped together. The eggs are three in number, and never (I believe) four, as stated by Mr. Selby. The eggs of all the species of the genus *Larus* being confined to three, at least as far as my own observation goes.



The eggs of this Gull, though often very much resembling those of the Lesser Black-backed and Herring Gulls, are generally marked with much larger blotches of colour, they are also for the most part considerably larger; I have, however, seen several specimens that were very little, if any, bigger than some large eggs of the Herring Gull.

Their eggs are rich and excellent to eat; when boiled, the yolk is much deeper in colour than those of the common fowl, and the white transparent; they are in consequence a most valuable acquisition to the owners of the islands upon which they are deposited. The custom is to take the whole of the eggs as soon as laid, and the second set in like manner, allowing them to sit the third time. One gentleman, Mr. Scott, upon whose property they breed, and by whom we were most hospitably received, told us that he had thus secured sixty dozen of their eggs for winter use, although the extent of the island was scarcely half an acre. In Norway, where the many islands offer as many situations suitable for their breeding places, they are much less sociable, and are widely squandered. We met with one or two pairs only on most of the lower grassy uninhabited islands. In the motionless and expansive flight of this fine bird, together with the loud laughing bark which they utter (at times much like the cry of that bird) they bear considerable resemblance to the eagle. I have many times watched a number of them with great interest, when almost beyond my sight, whirling round and round in intersecting circles, and for a length of time, without apparently moving at all a feather of their wings, much in the same manner in which, according to Audubon, a tribe of vultures survey the surrounding country in search of prey.





## XVII.

### LARUS FUSCUS. (LINN., TEMM.)

#### LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL.

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MONTAGU says, that on the island of Romsey, on the western coast of England, where the Lesser black-backed and Herring Gulls breed together, the former bears a very small proportion (about one in twenty) to the latter; upon the Farne islands, however, on our Northumberland coast, it is just the reverse, there being a very few pairs of the Herring Gull amongst the Lesser black-backed, which breed there in great numbers. They appear to prefer those islands which are the most rocky, and upon which there is the least herbage, and, though they have their choice, very few of them deposit their eggs upon the grass, and yet they rarely lay them without making a tolerably thick nest for their reception; it is of grass, loosely bundled together in large pieces, and placed in some slight depression or hollow of the rock. Amongst upwards of a hundred that I examined, one or two only had small pieces of sea-weed mixed with the other materials.— They lay two or three eggs, varying in every possible shade of colour, from the dark olive of Fig. 1, to the light tint of Fig. 2, the spots are also not less various, one in my collection having a beautiful girdle of markings at the larger end only. No class of birds is so unerring, or so regular in the time of their breeding, as those which inhabit the ocean; whilst most of our inland birds have been, for two months or more, irregularly engaged, either in building their nests, in incubation, or have already reared their young ones, they have deferred it to a much later period, and, as if urged by one impulse, the numerous species which inhabit these islands resort to them as it were by magic, and all is noise and bustle. This has occurred for years upon the Farne islands, within

a few days of the same time, being the first or second week in June. The protracted time of their breeding is, no doubt, owing to the weather, which, at an earlier season, would be too severe for the rearing of their young, in situations so much exposed. After they have begun to sit, they become very bold in the defence of their eggs: whilst amongst them, I was amused with one, near the nest of which I was sitting; it retired to a certain distance, to give it full force in its attack, and then made a stoop at my head, coming within two or three yards of me, this it continued to do, incessantly, till I left it. Mr. Darling, the keeper of the light-house on the island, informs me, that an old woman who was in the habit of gathering their eggs, had her bonnet almost torn to pieces, it being perforated throughout by their bills.





## LESTRIS CATARRACTES. (TEMML.)

SKUA GULL.

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SHETLAND alone, amongst the British islands, is the resort of this noble and rare bird during the breeding season. It is there, even in small numbers, and confined to three very limited localities, to which it returns year after year. On the island of Unst, the property of Mr. Edmonston, I saw only three pairs, which he informed me had been the number for a length of time: here they had chosen the summit of the island, and seem particularly partial to high ground. Rona's Hill, the highest on the islands, is another place of their choice; and, although here, they rear their young on the low ground at the base of the mountain, yet they may constantly be seen soaring, eagle-like, over its misty top. This remote and solitary place had been the undisturbed resort of numbers, until visited the year previous to our being there, by a man of the name of Dunn, a bird-stuffer, of Hull, who, devoid of the feelings of a naturalist, or admiration of the birds themselves, or decent regard for those of the kind and hospitable people by whom he was entertained, and upon whose property he was allowed unrestricted liberty to roam, took up his residence at the spot, in order, the more effectually, to destroy those birds which are considered by the people as their friends, and the protectors of their flocks against the Eagles; in this he found no difficulty, and succeeded in almost extirpating them, not more than ten or twelve remaining the following year. Here all the eggs which we found were of the deep colour of Fig. 1; most of those which I afterwards saw on Foula were lighter, and more nearly resembling Fig. 2; whilst one was nearly white, bleached, I should suppose, by the almost constant moisture of the moun-



tain mist, their breeding place being here within a few paces of the mountain top, 1,400 feet in height. More labour is bestowed by the Skua Gull in the formation of its nest than by other allied species; it is large, and composed of a quantity of the moss which grows in such moory situations; the eggs are two in number; the time of laying them towards the end of June; they are easily found, and their situation pointed out by the poor bird itself, in its anxiety to defend them. It is impossible not to admire its unflinching boldness of attack; soaring high above you, it will, on your approaching its nest, suddenly pounce down at a short distance from you to the level of your head, and flying directly at you, and with great force will strike you with its powerful beak, immediately rising to repeat its attack, which is continued during your stay, and with increasing rapidity as you near its nest. It is considered by the inhabitants as the protector of their flocks, and with good reason, and is by them protected in return. No Eagle would, with impunity, approach the dwelling place of a bird possessed of such courage and intrepidity; when soaring high above you, it much resembles an Eagle in its flight; when standing near you on the ground, you would not suppose it the same bird; it has then a thick heavy appearance, and a duck-like waddle; far different again, when, like the Arctic Gulls, it is in the pursuit of other birds to plunder them of their fish, I have seen it thus attack the Solan Goose. Mr. Drosier had been here before me, and much to the regret of the inhabitants, had destroyed many of their favourites, reducing the whole to a very small number.



## LESTRIS RICHARDSONII. (SWAINSON)

RICHARDSON'S ARCTIC GULL.

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THE *Lestris Richardsonii*, first characterized as a new species by Mr. Swainson, and named by him in compliment to Dr. Richardson, the celebrated traveller, by whom it was brought home from the Arctic regions, had previously been confounded with the *Lestris parasiticus* of Linnæus, from which it is readily distinguished by its shorter tail, together with many other characters. It is the common one upon our coast, the true *L. parasiticus* being of rare occurrence; it breeds on several of the Orkney and Shetland islands; on the latter upon those of Noss, Unst, and Foula, upon which I have had the pleasure of seeing them in considerable numbers. Here it breeds in society, as many as from fifty to sixty being met with at the same place, and seems to prefer those grounds which are low and marshy for the purposes of nidification, laying its eggs, notwithstanding, upon some slight eminence of dry ground.

On the contrary, amongst the very numerous small islands on the coast of Norway, they breed most commonly apart from each other, each pair taking possession of its separate island, upon the highest point of nearly all of which they are constantly to be seen perched, and upon it they usually lay their eggs; sometimes, however, choosing the lower grounds; here they become the merciless persecutors of the other species of sea-fowl in their neighbourhood, sucking their eggs whenever they are left uncovered by their owners, and with unavoidable speed of wing pursuing them over the surrounding sea, in order to compel them to disgorge those fish which they have captured for themselves or for their young ones; they are the hawks amongst the feathered inhabitants of the

ocean, fearlessly attacking even the Greater Black-backed Gull, and evincing, in their amazingly rapid evolutions of flight, when in pursuit of each other, a rapidity of wing which I should imagine surpasses that of any other bird I know. Upon some of the larger islands, where we observed two or more pairs, they were quite distinct, each occupying its own particular spot. There is something very unaccountable in the variation of plumage of the *Lestris Richardsonii*; no other species, with which we are acquainted, assuming as it does, in different individuals at the same time, and in both sexes, and when breeding, and consequently in a state of maturity, two distinct variations of plumage; some being of the deep uniform brown, as in the figure of the *Fauna Boreali Americana*; others with all the under parts white, or nearly so. Those of the last mentioned variety are, I should suppose, the more adult birds; they are, I think, larger, as noticed by Dr. Edmonston; this may, however, be accounted for by their being much more frequently females than males. The many specimens which my friend, Mr. John Hancock, and myself had an opportunity of dissecting, whilst in Norway, being of that sex; I doubt not, however, that the male is subject to the same change (but very rarely), not having more than twice met with the light-coloured birds in pairs, although I have in hundreds of instances seen a dark and light one together, as well as two dark ones, and in several have killed and dissected them. It is a curious fact that on the Shetland islands the light variety is much less numerous than the other, not bearing a proportion of more than one in six or seven, whilst in Norway they are nearly equal. You are made aware of your approach to their breeding-places, long before you reach them, by their loud, harsh, and most singular cry, more nearly resembling that of a cat than of any bird; nothing can exceed their solicitude as you near their eggs; seating themselves at a short distance from you, they flutter about and creep along the ground,

extending their wings, and expressing, with a language as intelligible as words, their extreme anxiety; the nest is merely an impression in the heath, grass, or moss, upon which they lay their eggs, their places of breeding being uncultivated moory wastes; their eggs are always two in number, differing very considerably, as in the accompanying Plate, with many other varieties, some long and narrow, and some with fewer spots; those figured are selected to show the near approach which some of them make to the eggs of other species; the middle figure resembling most closely that of the Whimbrel; the third figure shows a form which very rarely occurs, and is so much like some of the eggs of the Common Gull as not to be known from them. The time of breeding of the *L. Richardsonii* is the beginning of June.









## PROCELLARIA GLACIALIS. (LINN.)

## FULMAR, MALLEMOKE.

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THE Fulmar is a very local bird during the breeding season, being then confined to three or four places only (and these all near together) in the British islands. My friend, Mr. Atkinson, met with them in great numbers on the islands of St. Kilda, Borrera, and Soa, and was informed that they also breed in the south isles of Barra, in the outer Hebrides; they make no nest, but lay their single white egg upon ledges of the rocks, much in the same manner as the Kittiwake, but differing from it in always selecting those which are covered with grass; the latter making its nest upon the bare stone; they begin to lay their eggs in the first week of June, which, as well as the birds, are taken in great numbers by the inhabitants for food, the sea-birds forming almost their only subsistence. The egg of the Fulmar is remarkably large, being equal in size to those of the Skua and Herring Gulls, and about twice as large as those of the Kittiwake, although the bird is not much bigger than the latter. The egg of the Fulmar, as well as that of the Stormy Petrel, has a very strong musky smell, which it retains for a length of time; it is drawn at Figure 1 of the Plate.

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## PROCELLARIA PELAGICA. (LINN.)

STORMY PETREL, MOTHER CARY'S CHICKEN. SWALLOW,  
ALIMOUTI, AND SPENCIE OF SHETLAND.

IN an excursion through the Shetland islands during the present summer in search of rarities for this work, I had the

very great satisfaction of seeing and taking many of these most interesting birds alive ; they breed in great numbers on several of the islands, principally upon Foula, the north of Unst, and upon Papa and Oxna, two small islands in the bay of Scalloway ; the last of these I visited on the 31st of May, in hopes of procuring their eggs (it being the season in which most of the sea-birds begin to lay), but in this I was disappointed ; the fishermen who know them well by the name of Swallows, assured me that my search would be quite useless, that they had not yet “ come up from the sea,” and so it proved. Sixteen days after this (June 16, and three following days) I was at Foula, but was alike unsuccessful, the birds had arrived at their breeding places, but had not yet begun to lay their eggs ; numbers of them were sitting in their holes, and were easily caught ; one man brought me above a dozen tied up in an old stocking, two of which I kept alive in my room for nearly three days, and derived very great pleasure from their company ; during the day they were mostly inactive, and after pacing about the floor for a short time, poking their heads into every hole, they hid themselves between the feet of the table and the wall ; I could not prevail upon them to eat anything, though I tried to tempt them with fish and oil ; their manner of walking is very light and pleasing, and differing from that of every other bird which I have seen ; they carry their bodies so far forward and so nearly horizontal, as to give them the appearance of being out of equilibrium. In the evening, towards sunset, they left their hiding places, and for hours afterwards never ceased in their endeavours to regain their liberty, flying round and round the room, or fluttering against the windows ; when flying, their length of wing, and white above the tail, gives them a good deal the appearance of our House Martin. I went to bed and watched them in their noiseless flight, long ere I fell asleep, but in the morning they had disappeared ; one had fortunately made its escape through a broken pane

in the window which a towel should have occupied, the other had fallen into a basin full of the yolks of eggs which I had been blowing, and was drowned. I regretted much, the fate of a being rendered so interesting, by its very remarkable, wandering, solitary, and harmless life. Before leaving Shetland I again visited the island of Oxna, and though so late as the 30th of June, they were only just beginning to lay their eggs. In Foula they breed in holes in the cliff, at a great height above the sea; but here under stones which form the beach, at a depth of three or four feet, or more, according to that of the stones; as they go down to the earth, beneath them, on which to lay their eggs. In walking over the surface I could hear them, very distinctly, singing in a sort of warbling chatter, a good deal like Swallows when fluttering above our chimnies, but harsher; and in this way, by listening attentively, was guided to their retreat, and, after throwing out stones as large as I could lift, on all sides of me, seldom failed in capturing two or three seated on their nests, either under the lowest stone or between two of them. The nests, though of much the same materials as the ground on which they were placed, seemed to have been made with care; they were of small bits of stalks of plants, and pieces of hard dry earth. Like the rest of the genus, the Stormy Petrel lays invariably one egg only. Mr. Drosier, in a paper in *Loudon's Magazine*, Vol. III., P. 325, says that they lay two, but in this he is decidedly mistaken. During the day time they remain within their holes; and though the fishermen are constantly passing over their heads (the beach under which they breed being appropriated for the drying of fish), they are then seldom heard, but towards night become extremely garrulous; and when most other birds are gone to rest, issue forth in great numbers, spreading themselves far over the surface of the sea, the fishermen then meet with them very numerous; and though they had not previously seen one, are sure to be surrounded by them upon throwing pieces of fish overboard.

This is very opposite to Wilson's opinion, who says, "that they return to feed their young only during the night, in the day they are silent, and wander widely over the ocean;" the males may possibly be abroad during the day whilst the females are sitting, but I am inclined to think that they rarely come out before night, as the fishermen never see them at any other time.





## PROCELLARIA PUFFINUS. (LINN.)

SHEARWATER OR MANKS PETREL.

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LIKE the rest of the Petrels this is a bird seldom met with. It breeds in small numbers in the Western islands, upon St. Kildai, and the adjoining rocks; in Orkney, and in Shetland. Though constantly on the watch during my stay amongst the latter, I only once saw the bird at large, and suppose that it must feed principally during the night, like the Stormy Petrel. It breeds in the most wild and inaccessible rocks which bound these desert islands, in holes, much in the same manner as the Puffin, but is more careful in its selection, choosing those which are more difficult to discover, and overgrown at the mouth with tufts of grass; it makes a slight nest of dry herbs, usually about the depth of a man's arm, though sometimes a good deal beyond his reach; it lays one egg only, commonly so much resembling that of our domestic fowl that it cannot easily be distinguished from it. Amongst those I procured, (about fifteen in number,) are two of the variety figured in the Plate, a variety also occurring in the eggs of the Puffin, which are in all respects closely allied. These I had some difficulty in obtaining, from the very high estimation in which the young birds are held by the fishermen as food, for which they are annually captured; and not until I had offered a bribe could I prevail upon them to discover their places of resort; these are known to a very few only of the natives, (the best and most daring climbers.) Dr. Edmonston, of Shetland, informs me that the knowledge of them is kept as a family secret, and handed down from father to son. The Shearwater Petrel appears to be very

irregular in its time of breeding; the natives told me in the beginning of June that it would be quite useless to attempt seeking for their eggs, and that they would not begin to lay for some weeks. Of those that were brought me on the 5th of June, some were quite fresh, whilst others had live young ones in them; the same thing exactly occurred on the 19th of the same month.

In the notice accompanying the drawing of the egg of the Stormy Petrel in a former number, I omitted to notice a very interesting variety which I had not then seen, having only examined three or four specimens, but have since received a box of them from Shetland, containing two very beautifully marked round the larger end with very minute dots of red and purple, forming a clear though faintly marked zone.







CLVI.

GRUS CINEREA.

CRANE.

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FOR this large and conspicuous egg I am indebted to the kindness of my friend Mr. James Tuke, of York, who spares neither trouble nor expense to make his collection of eggs as complete as possible.

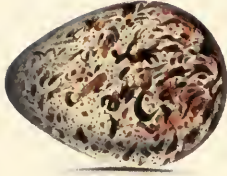
Whilst the habit and nidification of the Crane resembles closely that of the Stork, the Herons, and other allied species, its eggs are strangely different from any of them. The eggs of all these species, with the exception of those of the Spoonbill, are only sometimes tinted with colour, and always spotless; those of the Crane are, on the contrary, richly coloured, and very nearly resemble the eggs of the larger species of Gulls.

The Crane breeds in low and swampy districts, and, like the Stork, makes a large and bulky nest of sticks, dried grass, and any soft materials; like it, too—so Mr. Yarrell tells us—it sometimes elevates its nest on the top of some old building, and is said to lay but two eggs.

It is a little singular that the Crane, the Stork, and the Herons should each, at times, choose such very opposite situations for their nests. All are known to breed upon the ground—the Heron seldom,—and all make choice of more elevated sites as well.







## TRINGA PLATYRHYNCHA.

## BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER.

THIS bird, as well as its eggs, are quite a recent acquisition to our British list; and I feel much indebted to the kindness and liberality of Mr. Yarrell for the opportunity of figuring the very interesting varieties of the eggs now given; to him they were presented by Mr. Dann, together with the following information given in the 'British Birds.'

"This Sandpiper is by no means uncommon during the breeding season in Lulea and Tornea Lapmark, frequenting grassy morasses and swamps in small colonies, generally in the same places as those frequented by the Wood Sandpiper. It breeds also at Fogstuen, on the Dovre Field mountains in Norway, about three thousand feet above the level of the sea, where it arrives at the latter end of May. On its first appearance it is wild and shy; on being disturbed it soars to a great height in the air, rising and falling suddenly, like the Snipe: as the weather becomes warm its habits totally change, skulking and creeping through the dead grass, and allowing itself to be followed within a few yards.

"It seems to lay its eggs later than other species of this tribe generally. I found the eggs not sat upon on the 24th of June, and the last week in July the young were unable to fly, a period when all the other Sandpipers are on the move south. Its nest, like that of the Snipe, was on a hummocky tuft of grass. I procured one nest with four eggs in it."

Figure 2 of the plate is one of the most singular varieties of an egg which I have ever seen, and, except in shape, bears no resemblance whatever to the eggs of any of the Sandpipers. It was taken from the same nest with that of the accompanying figure.









CLVIII.

BUTEO LAGOPUS.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD.

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I was not at all aware, till it was made known to me through the pages of Mr. Yarrell's book, that there was any recorded instance of the Rough-legged Buzzard having been more than a temporary visitor of this country.

It is however there stated, upon the authority of Mr. Williamson, of Scarborough, that "it occasionally breeds in a precipitous dell near Hackness, in Yorkshire; and that a marked female returned a second year with a new mate to her favourite haunt."

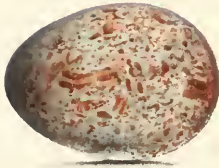
It is an abundant species in some of the extensive forests of Germany. I noticed several whilst travelling through some of the wilder parts of Baden and Wirtemberg, hunting over the vineyards and fields of Indian corn which border on the woody districts.

It breeds, like the other allied species of Hawks, in precipitous rocks and lofty trees, laying from three to five eggs, differing—like those of the Common Buzzard—considerably in their colour, some specimens being nearly white, whilst others are darker and more blotched with colour than the one from which I have drawn my figure, depending in this respect chiefly upon the age of the female bird.

The egg figured is from the cabinet of my friend Mr. James Tuke, of York.







## TURDUS ILIACUS.

REDWING.  

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IN our long rambles through the boundless forest scenery of Norway, or during our visits to some of its thousand isles, whether by day or by night, the loud, wild and most delicious song of the Redwing seldom failed to cheer us.

Unlike its neighbour the Fieldfare, it was solitary and shy, and on our approach to the tree on the top of which it was perched, would drop down and hide itself in the thick of the brushwood.

Throughout that part of the country which we visited it is known by the name of Nightingale, and well it deserves to be so — to a sweeter songster I have never listened.

Like the Nightingale of more southern skies, its clear sweet song would occasionally delight us during the hours of night, if the two or three delightful hours of twilight which succeed the long day of a Norwegian summer can be called night. The birds, like the other inhabitants of the country, seem loath to lose in sleep a portion of this short-lived season.

Anxious to extend our researches onwards, in the hope that as we proceeded north we should prove more successful, we had lingered but little to search for the nest and eggs of the Redwing, and our enquiries with regard to them had been unavailing.

One afternoon, as we approached the sea-coast, and at the same time the northern limit of a beaten road, we discovered a nest of the Redwing; but to our great disappointment it had young ones.

Having almost reached the boundary of our woodland rambles for the present, we spent the whole of the following day exploring the beautiful woods by which we were on all sides surrounded. We found a second nest of the

Redwing, but the eggs were again hatched. It was here, too, that we saw the Brambling, accompanied by its full-grown young ones.

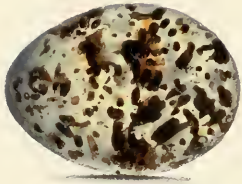
The nest of the Redwing is placed, like those of the Thrush and Blackbird, in the centre of a thorn or other thick bush. It is similar to those of the Fieldfare, Blackbird and Ring Ouzel. Outwardly it is formed of moss, roots and dry grass, inwardly cemented with clay, and again lined with a finer grass.

Several of the eggs were brought home by Mr. Dann ; some of these are in the possession of Mr. Yarrell, and are similar to those which I have drawn from the collection of Mr. J. Tuke. As will be seen by the plate they are somewhat less than the eggs of the Fieldfare, but in other respects are perfectly similar, as well as to those of the Blackbird and Ring Ouzel ; indeed we have no other genus of birds in which the eggs of several species are so much alike.





CLX



## GLAREOLA TORQUATA.

COLLARED PRATINCOLE.

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KNOWING nothing of this species I make free to extract the following from Mr. Yarrell's work. "Among a collection of birds recently presented to the Zoological Society by a son of Drummond Hay, Esq., and which had been shot by that young gentleman in the vicinity of Tangiers, were two skins of the Pratincole. On making enquiry of the donor in reference to the Pratincole particularly, I learned that the habits of this bird corresponded closely with those of our Plovers, frequenting sandy plains, flying and running with great rapidity, forming a slight nest in any accidental depression of the dry soil, and laying four eggs. One example of this bird's egg was given to the Society."

Mr. Yarrell has kindly supplied me with a drawing made from this egg, from which the woodcut given in his own book was taken, and from this I had also intended to make my drawing, had not Mr. John Hancock, of Newcastle, furnished me with the egg itself, which he has from a trustworthy correspondent in France. It is very different from the drawing lent me by Mr. Yarrell, but as I have a great aversion to copy from anything but nature, I have preferred giving Mr. Hancock's egg, having no reason to doubt its authenticity, as it is very different from any other egg with which I am acquainted.







## CYPSELUS ALPINUS.

ALPINE SWIFT. WHITE-BELLIED SWIFT.

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No wonder that the Alpine Swift should sometimes visit our shores, since it is common throughout a great part of the southern continent of Europe, and gifted with a speed of wing which would set distance at defiance. Its flight is said to be even swifter than that of our well-known species.

It is met with in some parts of France, Spain, Italy and Switzerland. It breeds, like our own species, in high rocks, ruins, and in church-steeple, and Mr. Yarrell says pays yearly visits for that purpose to the rocks in the canton of Geneva, the cathedral at Fribourg and the steeple of Berne. I remember watching for it eagerly in the neighbouring districts of Lucerne and Zurich, but without enjoying the gratification which I sought.

This Swift makes a nest similar to the commoner species, of pieces of straw firmly cemented together by some glutinous matter, and lined with feathers, in which it lays from three to five eggs.









## HIMANTOPUS MELANOPTERUS.

BLACK-WINGED STILT. LONG-LEGGED PLOVER.

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THIS bird is too singularly conspicuous to remain long alive on its visits to this country ; and though—were it to consult its own choice—it would probably, with many other species, remain with us to breed, we can scarcely hope that it will ever be permitted to do so undisturbed.

During the spring of 1826 my correspondent Mr. Salmon, whose collection of eggs forms so attractive an object in the Norwich Museum, shot a pair at Stoke Ferry, in Norfolk, from the female bird of which he extracted eggs in a state of forwardness.

The only egg which is in any of the cabinets of this country, is the one which I have drawn from the collection of my friend Mr. John Hancock, of Newcastle. It is altogether different in colour from the figure given by Dr. Thieneman ; it was, however, sent to him by a correspondent in France, upon whom he could rely.

The Long-legged Plover frequents the margins of lakes, and lays four eggs, in a slight depression on the bare ground.







## NEOPHRON PERCNOPTERUS.

EGYPTIAN VULTURE.

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SINCE the works of the continental ornithologists are not at present within my reach, I must again refer to the pages of Mr. Yarrell's book for the little information which is to be had regarding the nidification of this our British Vulture.

Even this is hardly satisfactory, Le Vaillant stating that it lays three or four eggs; while Bruce, who says that they build their nests in the most deserted parts of the country, adds that they lay but two. From these statements we may correctly infer that the Egyptian Vulture lays from two to four eggs.

The one from which I have made my drawing possesses quite the character of those of other species of the raptorial birds. It is round in contour, and has the blue colouring of those of the Harriers. It is from the collection of Mr. J. Hancock, and was received from France.









CLXIV.

ANSER BRACHYRHYNCHUS. (BAILLON).

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE.

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THIS species, though resembling most closely the Bean Goose, from which it is dissimilar chiefly in its smaller size, the comparative shortness of its beak, and the colour of its legs and feet, — differs from it, as Mr. Yarrell has shown, still more in habit; and when confined with the other species — the Grey Lag, the Bean and White-fronted Geese, which are all upon the most sociable footing with each other, — keeping itself aloof from all of them. He describes its voice also as different. The figures of the accompanying eggs are from his cabinet. He goes on to say: —

“The Ornithological Society has a female, which, during the summer of 1840, would not associate with any of the various species kept with her in St. James’s Park, yet she laid eight eggs and began to sit.”

This season the Zoological Society have allowed a male belonging to them to be transferred to St. James’s Park; but although the pair were soon good friends, there is as yet no produce.

In the ‘Magazine of Natural History’ Mr. Macgillivray says “that the Pink-footed or Short-billed Goose breeds in great numbers in the small islands of the Sound of Harris. This bird was seen in flocks so late as the beginning of May; was observed in pairs among the islands of the Sound about the middle of the month; and had the young strong upon the wing about the end of July.”

ANSER ALBIFRONS.

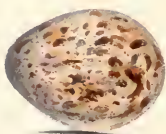
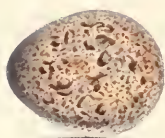
WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE.

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THE egg of this species, like that of the preceding, was laid by the bird in a state of confinement, in the gardens of the Zoological Society, where they have also successfully reared their young ones. We saw this species in Norway during the summer we were there.



CLXV



## ANTHUS RICARDI.

RICHARD'S PIPIT.

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THESE eggs are the fruits of the assiduous and successful bird-nesting rambles of the late Mr. John Hoy, by whom they were brought from the continent. They are now in the collection of my friend Mr. Henry Doubleday, of Epping, and are the only ones, I believe, which have reached this country.

This Pipit, like the rest of the genus, makes its nest in a tuft of grass upon the ground. It is of dry grass, moss and a few hairs; the eggs are four or five in number.









## COTURNIX VIRGINIANA.

VIRGINIAN QUAIL.

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ALTHOUGH, like the Pheasant and the Red-legged Partridge, this species is a forced rather than a voluntary visitant of this country, and one of but recent date, I have followed Mr. Yarrell in admitting it to our list, as it will probably, in a few more years, become extensively naturalized and widely dispersed over the country,—Mr. J. Hancock has obtained a specimen shot in Northumberland, and another has been killed near Bristol.

Mr. Yarrell quotes a letter of the Rev. Richard Lubbock, in which it is stated that a nest, supposed to be that of this species,—the man who found it, and who saw the bird, having stated that it resembled a Partridge in its flight, being much smaller,—was found at Barton, in Norfolk, some years ago. Mr. Salmon obligingly sent me some of these eggs—which were in his collection—to look at, and I do not hesitate to say that they are those of the same bird as the one now figured—an American specimen—from the cabinet of my kind friend Mr. Yarrell.

The following interesting account is copied from his book; it is communicated by a gentleman who had some of these birds in his garden.

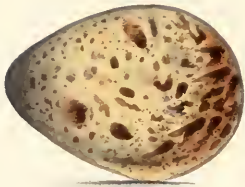
“Towards the end of May I perceived one of the cock birds carrying straws, and twisting them about over his head, and I found they were making a nest within a bundle of pea-sticks. This nest was the joint production of male and female; it was placed on the ground within the pea-sticks, and shaped much like a wren’s, with a hole on one side and covered over at top. After the hen had laid about twelve eggs she began to sit, and with as much assiduity as our common hen. When I thought it was her time to hatch I examined her nest, and found it deserted, and

the egg-shells lying about. Much pleased with this circumstance I went cautiously about to find the dam with her young ones, and after searching for some time, the first intimation I had of her presence was from her flying in my face with great agitation, like our common hen."

What is here told with regard to the nest of this species is most curious, all the other rasorial birds being especially careless in its construction.



CLXVII



## TRINGA MARITIMA.

PURPLE SANDPIPER.

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A nest and eggs of this species, said to have been found in Scotland, were amongst the rarities in the museum of Mr. Bullock; but in whose possession they now are I have not been able to ascertain.

In some remarks published by Mr. Selby, on the birds frequenting the Fern Islands, he mentions having there met with the Purple Sandpiper and its young ones, which were scarcely able to fly.

The egg which I have figured is from a careful drawing lent me by Mr. Yarrell, and made from an egg in the collection of Mr. Leadbeater, of London.

I have seen small parties of this Sandpiper during the breeding season on the Shetland Islands, as well as during our Norwegian bird-nesting excursion; and I have often wondered why so many individuals of several species of the sea-birds are idlers during this busy season.







CLXVII



## SCOLOPAX GALLINULA.

JACK SNIPE. JUDCOCK.

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THERE are several reported instances of the Jack Snipe having been shot in this country during the summer season.

Mr. Selby was assured, during his visit to Sutherlandshire, that it breeds annually in that county, although not so fortunate as to find it.

I have seen it at Prestwick Carr, near Newcastle, after the Common Snipe had begun to lay its eggs; and have very little doubt that some of them remain to breed on the extensive moors and morasses of Scotland and Ireland.

Such places are frequented only by the cutters of peat, and are very rarely trodden either by the ornithologist, or any one interested in his favourite subject, neither is it the time of year for the pursuits of the sportsman.

The Jack Snipe is at all times difficult to raise, and during the time that it is sitting upon its eggs, would allow you to walk over it without being flushed; and unless carefully sought for with the assistance of a dog, would remain undetected.

Temminck says that they breed plentifully near St. Petersburgh; and the late Mr. John Hoy found its eggs at Falconswaerd, in North Brabant: but I have to regret that his death has deprived me of that information he was always ready to communicate.

The accompanying figure is from one of the eggs brought home by him, and presented to Mr. Henry Doubleday a short time before his death. It has all the character of a Snipe's egg, and could not be mistaken for that of any other genus.

I have no hesitation in saying that the Jack Snipe, like the whole of the Scolopacidæ, lays four eggs.

A drawing lent me by Mr. Yarrell, and made from a Jack Snipe's egg in the Paris Museum, differs from my figure in being a good deal less.





CLXIX



## FRINGILLA MONTIFRINGILLA.

## BRAMBLING. MOUNTAIN FINCH.

To the kindness of Mr. Dashwood I am indebted for the pleasure it affords me to figure an egg, about which nothing has been before known. Mr. Dashwood has had the Brambling for some years at his residence at Beccles, Suffolk; and from him I have the following interesting notes.

His aviary is a large one, enclosing a considerable piece of ground, surrounded by ivy, and planted inside with shrubs, so that the birds enjoy something of their native liberty.

The nest having been completed four days, the female laid her first egg on the 16th of June, 1839, depositing another daily till the 21st, when they were removed.

“The nest was deep, the walls thick, a large quantity of materials employed for the foundation, which was worked among the stalks of the ivy-leaves. It was composed of moss, wool and dry grass, and lined with hair. Portions of the nests of the Chaffinch, Green Linnet, White-Throat and Yellow Bunting were plentifully supplied, so that ample choice of materials was afforded.

“In the latter part of July of the same year another pair of Bramblings built, placing their nest on the ground close by the root of a shrub, on a tuft of grass. Outside of the nest of moss, lined with hair. From this nest I removed four eggs on the 1st of August. On the 17th of June, 1840, they laid again, having built in the ivy. This nest I did not disturb; and although the eggs were hatched they did not succeed in rearing the young ones.”

In a state of nature the Brambling would not have built its nest upon the ground; the materials chosen would probably have been the same. The eggs, as will be seen by

the plate, are, as we might have expected, very much like those of the chaffinch.

Whilst on our way northwards, June 8th, we saw some of the Bramblings in the pine-forests of Norway; but searched till we were weary for the nests, to no purpose. On our return homewards through the same district, July 1st, we had, however, the mortification of knowing that the nests must have been there, for the birds were now accompanied by their young ones.

















