

BARTRAM'S SANDPIPER.

Totanus Bartramia, *Temm.*

Le Chevalier à longue queue.

For the history of this bird we must have recourse to the valuable pages of the justly celebrated American ornithologist Wilson, by whom it was first discovered and described. Its occurrence in Europe is so rare that we know of only two or three instances of its having been procured within the limits of this portion of the globe. M. Temminck informs us that one was killed in autumn on the Dutch coast, and that another came under his observation which had been taken in the eastern part of Germany. We believe that as yet it has never been seen in Great Britain.

“Unlike most of their tribe,” says Wilson, “these birds appear to prefer running about among the grass, feeding on beetles and other winged insects. There were three or four in company; they seemed extremely watchful, silent, and shy, so that it was always with extreme difficulty I could approach them.

“Having never met with them on the sea shore, I am persuaded that their principal residence is in the interior, in meadows and suchlike places. They run with great rapidity, sometimes spreading their tail and dropping their wings, as birds do who wish to decoy you from their nest: when they alight they remain fixed, stand very erect, and utter two or three sharp whistling notes as they mount to fly. They are remarkably plump birds, weighing upwards of three quarters of a pound; their flesh is superior, in point of delicacy, tenderness, and flavour, to any other of the tribe with which I am acquainted.

“This species is twelve inches long and twenty-one in extent; the bill is an inch and a half long, slightly bent downwards, and wrinkled at the base; the upper mandible black on the ridge, the lower as well as the edge of the upper of a fine yellow; front, stripe over the eye, neck, and breast pale ferruginous marked with small streaks of black, which on the lower part of the breast assume the form of arrow-heads; crown black; the plumage slightly skirted with whitish; chin, orbit of the eye, whole belly and vent pure white; hind head and neck above ferruginous, minutely streaked with black; back and scapulars black, the former slightly skirted with ferruginous, the latter with white; tertials black bordered with white; primaries plain black; shaft of the exterior quill snowy, its inner vane elegantly pectinated with white; secondaries pale brown spotted on their outer vanes with black and tipped with white; greater coverts dusky, edged with pale ferruginous and spotted with black; lesser coverts pale ferruginous, each feather broadly bordered with white, within which is a concentric semicircle of black; rump and tail-coverts deep brown black, slightly bordered with white; tail tapering, of a pale brown orange colour beautifully spotted with black, the middle feathers centred with dusky; legs yellow tinged with green; the outer toe joined to the middle by a membrane; lining of the wings elegantly barred with black and white; iris of the eye dark or blue black; eye very large. The male and female are nearly alike.”

We have figured an adult male of the natural size.