

## Genus UPUPA, *Linn.*

GEN. CHAR. *Beak* very long, slightly arched, slender, triangular and compressed. *Nostrils* basal, lateral, ovoid, open, surmounted by the feathers of the forehead. *Toes* three before, and one behind; the external and middle ones united as far as the first joint. *Nails* short, a little bent, except in the hind one which is straight. *Tail* square, consisting of ten feathers. *Wings* moderate; fourth and fifth *quill-feathers* the longest.

## HOPOE.

*Upupa epops*, *Linn.*

La Huppe.

THERE are few birds more elegant in their appearance or more singular in their manners than the Hoopoe; and although it is not a resident in the British Isles, nor strictly a periodical visitor, we are, from its frequent occurrence, enabled to give much information respecting its natural habits and modes of life. The genus to which it belongs is extremely limited in the number of its species, three only being at present recognised. Our European example, the *Upupa epops*, may be regarded as a migratory bird, and its natural range is very extensive. It is found over nearly the whole of Africa; India and China may also be enumerated among the countries it inhabits, as specimens received from the latter and the Himalaya mountains sufficiently testify. In continental Europe, it is spread from the southern to the northern extremities, but is more abundant in the former, where it appears to be a bird of regular and periodical passage; being, however, regulated in these migrations by the abundance of the food upon which it subsists, viz., the larvæ of scarabæi, together with other insects which live near moist and humid grounds, not even rejecting tadpoles, small frogs, and worms. In the British Islands, as we have already observed, its occurrence is very irregular, being scarce in some seasons, and much more frequent in others; and when it does visit us, its animated motions and foreign appearance, unfortunately for the bird, bring round it a host of persecutors. There are, however, a few instances on record of its having bred among us. The southern coast of England, as we might most naturally expect, is that on which it makes its first appearance, generally in the month of May; hence they disperse themselves over the Island, and are often met with in the most unexpected localities; but the situations most preferred are thick hedgerows, copses, and isolated trees or bushes, in the neighbourhood of low marshy lands: they seem to have but little care respecting their concealment, generally perching on the most conspicuous branch, erecting and depressing the beautiful fan-like crest as if to attract observation: but though it perches upon trees, it is not, as its peculiar legs and feet indicate, a bird ordained by nature to be an exclusive inhabitant of the woods and groves, its feeble toes being ill adapted for clasping with strength and firmness. Its flight is slow and undulating, similar to that of the Woodpeckers.

To enumerate its frequent capture in England would neither add to science nor to a knowledge of its habits; still we beg to mention an instance, which came within our knowledge, of one shot by L. Sullivan, Esq. on the 28th of September 1832, in his own pleasure-grounds at Broom House, Fulham, Middlesex; and we are led to suppose, from the lateness of the season, that it had incubated in the neighbourhood. It chooses for the site of its nest a variety of situations, as opportunity may serve; holes in trees, crevices in rocks, fissures in walls or masonry, holes in the ground or dungheaps, being among the places it has been observed at different times to occupy: the eggs are five in number, clouded with dark grey on a light grey ground.

The young soon assume the adult plumage, which is precisely similar in either sex.

The ground colour of the head, neck, and shoulders is of a beautiful fawn; a double row of long feathers surmounts the head, beginning at the base of the beak and ending at the occiput, capable of being thrown up perpendicularly, so as to form a fan-like crest; each of these feathers is tipped with black; the wing-coverts and scapulars are banded alternately with black and white; the quills are black with a white oblique band; rump white; tail black banded across the middle with white; the flanks and under tail-coverts light greyish fawn dashed with obscure lines of brown.

We have figured two adult birds of the natural size.