

Genus *CERTHIA*, *Ill.*

GEN. CHAR. *Bill* of mean length, curved, triangular, compressed, slender, and sharp-pointed. *Tongue* short. *Nostrils* basal, pierced horizontally, naked, and partly covered by an arched membrane. *Feet* with three toes before and one behind, which last is strong, and longer than the middle toe; the outer toe united at its base to the middle one. *Tail* wedge-shaped, composed of twelve stiff, sharp-pointed, and deflected feathers. *Wings* having the first quill short, and the second and third shorter than the fourth, which is the longest of all.

COMMON CREEPER.

Certhia familiaris, *Linn.*

Le Grimpereau.

THE genus *Certhia* as now restricted will contain but two species, the bird here figured (which is the only one hitherto discovered in Europe), and one from the Himalaya mountains, characterized some years since by Mr. Vigors under the name of *Certhia Himalayana*. This new species bears a strong resemblance to its European congener, from which it may be distinguished by the markings of brown across the tail-feathers; it is also a trifle larger.

The Common Creeper appears to be very generally dispersed over the whole of the Continent, but according to M. Temminck it becomes more rare as we approach the northern parts of Russia and Siberia; which may be reasonably accounted for, by the diminished number of insects in all high latitudes.

It is a stationary species in the British Islands, where it is very generally dispersed, but is of course more plentiful in the neighbourhood of wooded districts, plantations, &c. It also frequents gardens and orchards, where its presence may generally be detected by its weak shrill cry, which is not unlike that of the Golden-crested Wren (*Regulus auricapillus*).

It is an excellent climber, ascending the boles of trees with great rapidity, in search of insects, upon which it solely subsists. Its stiff and elastic tail, together with its long hind toe and curved claw, presents a structure peculiarly adapted for ascending trees.

Its nest is constructed in the hole of a decayed tree, and is formed of grass and mosses, with a lining of feathers: the eggs, which are from seven to nine in number, are white speckled with reddish brown.

Head and upper surface yellowish brown intermingled with black, brown, and greyish white; rump pale chestnut red; first four quills dusky; the remainder have a broad reddish white band in the middle, and the tips white; tail greyish brown; a whitish streak passes over the eyes; throat, breast, and under surface white, passing into ochreous yellow on the vent; upper mandible dusky, lower yellowish white; legs and toes yellowish brown.

The sexes are alike in plumage.

We have figured an adult bird of the natural size.