

GREY-HEADED GREEN WOODPECKER.

Picus canus, Gmel.

Le Pic cendré.

WE have reason to think with M. Temminck, that the present species has been often confounded with the *Picus viridis*; but it may be distinguished by its rather smaller size, and the grey colour of its head, the red mark on the top of which is more circumscribed, while in the female it is entirely wanting. In general habits, however, the two species are altogether similar, and may be taken as examples of a group including some species from the Himalaya mountains, and other parts of the old world, which present a departure in several characteristics from the more typical Woodpeckers, of which we have given the *Picus martius* as a representative. The subjects of this group appear more terrestrial in their habits, searching for their food on the ground, and less exclusively confined to the trees as climbers. We shall not, however, here enter into the details of these dissentient peculiarities, which occupy a more prominent place in the description of the *P. viridis*, but confine ourselves to the bird before us.

The native localities of the Grey-headed Green Woodpecker would appear to be Norway, Sweden, Russia, and, more or less, the whole of the northern portions of Europe; and, as we are informed by M. Temminck, is also an inhabitant of the northern parts of America. Although it may be deemed presumption to doubt the assertion of so great a naturalist, we cannot help expressing our belief that neither this bird nor any of the species of the group to which it strictly belongs are to be met with on any part of that continent; its place there being occupied by a genus similar in habits and manners, to which the title of *Colaptes* is assigned, and which possesses essential external differences. In France and Switzerland it is very scarce; and we believe is never found in Holland or in the British Islands.

Its food, like that of the Green Woodpecker, consists of insects in general, more especially ants and their larvæ, occasionally feeding on fruits and nuts. Its nidification is also the same; the female depositing four or five eggs of a pure white in the hollow of a tree.

The beak is greenish-yellow, becoming dark at its edges; legs black; irides very light red; forehead crimson; a black mark extends between the eye and the beak; the occiput and space between the crimson forehead and eyes grey; on the cheeks, which are cinereous with a slight tinge of green, a narrow black line extends downwards; the back bright green; upper tail-coverts yellowish; wings olive-green; quill-feathers darker, with distinct yellowish-white spots along their outer edges; tail dark olive-brown, the two middle feathers having traces of obscure transverse bars; the under parts, like the cheeks, cinereous tinged with green.

The general colour of the female is the same as in the male, with the exception of the head, the crown of which is entirely grey; the black mark between the eye and beak less apparent, and that on the cheeks smaller.

The young males at a very early age, even while in the nest, are to be known by the crimson forehead and the black mark on their cheeks; but the young females at this period have no trace of these lines, and they are not acquired till some time afterwards.

Length between eleven and twelve inches.

Our Plate represents a male and female of the natural size, in their adult plumage.