

GREEN WOODPECKER.

Picus viridis, Linn.

Le Pic vert.

THE present bird represents a group of the great family of *Picidae* or Woodpeckers, which appears to hold an intermediate station between the species of the American genus *Colaptes*, distinguished by their slender arched bills and terrestrial habits, and those which exhibit a closer approximation to the typical form, whose habits, manners, and food, confine them entirely to trees.

The present group appears to contain about eight or ten well-marked species, all peculiar to the old continent, but of which number only two, viz. the *Picus viridis* and *Picus canus*, Linn., are common to Europe, where they appear to fill the same relative situation that the species of the genus *Colaptes* do in America.

This familiar and well-known bird is not only frequent in every part of Great Britain, but is equally spread throughout the whole of Europe, with the exception of the marshy and low lands of Holland, frequenting woods and forests, where its presence may be generally discovered by its clamorous note, or its restless disposition in proceeding from tree to tree in search of insects. This kind of food it takes by inserting its long and retractile tongue into the crevices of the bark in which they lodge, but is not less frequently seen on the ground in search of ants, snails, worms, &c., nor will it refuse fruits, walnuts and berries. It deposits its eggs,—which are of a smooth shining white, and from four to six in number,—in the holes of trees partially occasioned by decay and enlarged by its own exertion. The Green Woodpecker remains with us the whole of the year, and having attained its adult stage of plumage undergoes no subsequent variation. The top of the head, the occiput, and moustache or stripe on the cheek, are of a brilliant red; the face black; the upper surface fine green; the rump tinged with yellow; the under parts pale greyish green; quill-feathers brown, crossed with bars of yellowish white; tail brown, barred transversely with a lighter colour; bills and legs greyish green; irides white.

The female differs from the male externally only in being rather less in size and in the absence of the red moustache, which colour is supplied by black.

The young have only traces of red on the head; the moustache is indicated by black and white feathers; the general colour is paler and more obscure, the back being marked with ash-coloured blotches, and the under parts with brown zigzag bars; irides dark grey.

We have figured an adult male and a young bird in the plumage of the first autumn.