

AZURE-WINGED MAGPIE.

Pica cyanea, Wagler.

It is with great pleasure that we here present, for the first time, a figure of this beautiful and elegant Magpie ; a bird which has escaped the notice of most of the authors who have expressly treated on the Ornithology of Europe ; and even M. Temminck, who has devoted so much attention to this department of the science, makes no mention of it in a work characterized by accuracy and research. It is only in that useful and little-known book, the "*Systema Avium*" of Dr. Wagler, that any correct notice is to be found respecting it, and even his account is very slight : furnishing us with few details as respects its habits or manners, he merely informs us that it is a native of Spain, arriving in flocks in April, frequenting bushes and willow groves, and is distinguished, like our common species, by its impudence and clamour.

We are personally indebted for the loan of the fine specimen from which our figure was taken, to the liberality and kindness of Captain S. E. Cook, who observed the species to be pretty abundant in the neighbourhood of Madrid, from whence he procured it in a recent state, with several other birds equally rare and valuable.

The beak and legs are black ; crown of the head, occiput and ear-coverts, black with shining violet reflections ; the whole of the back and rump ashy rose-colour ; throat white ; the under surface the same as the back, with the exception of its being a few shades lighter ; wings and tail delicate azure blue, the primaries, with the exception of the two first which are wholly black, white on their outer web for about half their length from the tip ; tail graduated, each feather tipped with white, the two middle ones more obscurely so : total length from twelve to fourteen inches. The sexes do not differ in external appearance.

Our Plate represents an individual in its finest plumage, and of the natural size.