

## SIBERIAN JAY.

*Garrulus infaustus*, Temm.

Le Geai imitateur.

THE northern portions of Europe, namely Norway, Sweden, and Siberia, constitute the habitat of this interesting bird, which offers to the naturalist many points for further investigation. With two closely allied species from the north of the American continent, it would seem to form a genus, approximating we admit to that of the true Jays, but still removed from it by certain modifications of character. The general form is less robust, the bill more feeble and shorter, and the feathers more plume-like and disorganized. We are not, however, prepared to institute a new genus, but provisionally assign the present bird a place in that of *Garrulus*. The Siberian Jay, like its American relative (*Garrulus Canadensis*), has a full share of that prying curiosity and imitative qualities which distinguish the race. Its manners are bold and inquisitive, and its actions quick and lively. Confined entirely to the northern latitudes, it is totally unknown in the temperate and southern districts of Europe; and its soft and downy plumage is no doubt well calculated to protect it from the effects of the extreme cold of a Siberian winter; which, as the bird is not migratory, it must in all respects be fitted to endure. In these dreary regions, where the human population is thin and scattered, the Siberian Jay relieves the woods and thickets of part of their loneliness, and attracts the notice of the traveller by its familiarity and restlessness.

Its food consists of wild berries and fruits, to which insects, their larvæ and worms are also added.

Of its nidification little is known; but in this respect we may naturally conclude that it resembles its allied congener the *Garrulus Canadensis*, which is an early breeder, even before the snow is off the ground; constructing a nest of sticks and grass, in a fir-tree in the recesses of the woods, and laying five blue eggs.

The head is covered with a crest of short blackish feathers; those which cover the nostrils, and those also around the base of the beak are yellowish white; the upper surface is olive brown; the shoulders and outer tail-feathers fine rufous; the quills and two middle tail-feathers brown; the throat and under surface of a lighter tint than the back, changing insensibly to a pale rufous, which becomes more decided on the thighs and under tail-coverts; beak and tarsi black. Length eleven inches.

We are not aware that it undergoes any periodical changes in its plumage, which is alike in both sexes.

The Plate represents an adult bird of the natural size.