

Genus GARRULUS.

GEN. CHAR. *Bill* shorter than the head, conical, slightly compressed, straight at the base, rather deflected towards the tip, which is faintly emarginated; the lower mandible of nearly equal thickness, and having its culmen equally convex with that of the upper; commissure straight; head crested. *Nostrils* basal, lateral, hidden from view by short setaceous plumes. *Wings* rounded, with the first quill-feather short; the fourth, fifth and sixth of nearly equal length, and the longest in the wing. *Tail* square or slightly rounded. *Legs* weaker than in the genus *Corvus*. *Tarsi* longer than the middle toe; the outer toe joined at its base to the middle one, and longer than the inner; hind toe strong, with a dilated sole. *Claws* stout, moderately curved and sharp; that on the hind toe stronger and longer than any of the rest.

J A Y.

Garrulus glandarius, *Briss.*

Le Geai.

THIS common but extremely ornamental bird is dispersed over the greater portion of the wooded districts of Europe, and together with one from the Himalaya mountains, and another which we have seen, truly distinct from either, form a small but well-defined group, which appears to range intermediate between the latter group and the Pies (*Picæ*), to which the generic title *Garrulus* should be strictly limited, to the exclusion of the Blue Jay of America, and its nearly allied congeners, together with the *Garrulus lanceolatus* of the Himalaya mountains. Thus circumscribed, the true Jays will be found to be exclusively peculiar to the Old World.

The Common Jay of Europe is a noisy, shy, and crafty bird, eluding observation by resorting continually to the more dense parts of woods and thick hedgerows, and is almost entirely arboreal in its habits, seldom going on the ground, and when it does, it is among thickets and bushes, which conceal it from view. Its chief subsistence consists of fruits, berries, and leguminous seeds, while the season lasts, together with the larvæ of insects, worms, grubs, &c., and occasionally the young and eggs of birds. Its propensities render it extremely mischievous in gardens stocked with fruit trees and leguminous vegetables.

The Jay is a permanent resident in our island, as well as in the temperate portions of Europe. It breeds in the most secluded coppices and woods, constructing its nest in the fork of a tree; the nest being formed externally of small twigs, generally of the birch, and lined with fibres, roots, &c. The eggs are four or five in number, of a pale blue, blotched with brown, but the markings are so numerous and minute as to produce a uniform dull grey.

At certain seasons the Jay assembles in small flocks, probably containing the brood of the year, which associate during the winter, until spring leads them to separate into pairs, and commence the great work of incubation.

There exists no visible difference in the plumage of the male and female, and the young at an early age closely assimilates to the adult in colouring. In captivity, this bird becomes a favourite, from its pert and familiar manners, and its aptness in learning words and even sentences.

Bill black, from the base of which a large moustache of the same colour extends over the cheeks; the top of the head is covered with a short full crest, the feathers of which are brownish grey, with a central dash of black, exhibiting as they pass to the occiput faint transverse bars of blue; the whole of the upper surface, as well as the under, is, with the exception of the upper and under tail-coverts (which are white), of a rich vinous or reddish ash colour; wings ornamented with a beautiful blue speculum barred with black; the shoulders chestnut barred with dusky brown; the primaries are silvery white on their outer edges; the secondaries are black, except the first three or four feathers, which are white at their base; tail black, the two middle feathers exhibiting faint indications of blue bars at their base; irides blueish grey; tarsi brown.

The Plate represents the bird of the natural size.