

Genus BOMBYCIVORA, Temm.

GEN. CHAR. *Beak* short, straight, elevated, the upper *mandible* slightly curved towards its extremity and furnished with a very marked tooth. *Nostrils* basal, ovoid, open, concealed by short stiff hairs directed forward. *Toes*, three before and one behind, the external and middle toes united. *Wings* moderate, the first and second *quill-feathers* equal and longest.

WAXEN CHATTERER.

Bombycivora garrula, Temm.

Le Grand Jaseur.

THE birds composing the genus *Bombycivora*, as restricted by M. Temminck, are by no means numerous, three species only having as yet, we believe, been discovered. The present beautiful example, which is the largest, and may be considered the most typical of the genus, is the only one Europe affords us; it is also to be found in the northern regions of America, although much less common than the smaller allied species peculiar to that Continent. The rare and uncertain visits of the Waxen Chatterer to our Island afford us but little insight into its history, as it is in winter only that small flocks now and then appear, driven probably by the severity of the season in northern climes to a more southern retreat.

Its true habitat appears to be the regions of the arctic circle, whence it emigrates to the adjacent districts both of Asia and Europe. Dr. Latham informs us that it is plentiful both at St. Petersburg and Moscow in the winter, but is observed to come there from parts further north, and to depart again to the arctic circle in spring. It is never known to breed in Russia, is scarce in Siberia, has not been found beyond the Lena, and is mentioned as a Tartarian bird by Frisch, who says it breeds among the rocks; and nothing more, we believe, is known respecting its habits and nidification. The formation and general structure of its beak indicate it to be a true berry-feeder, and we accordingly find that during its visits here its food consists of the berries of the mountain ash, the haw, the privet, &c.

The general colour of the body of the male bird is of a dull vinous ash, with a bright ferruginous tinge on the forehead and cheeks; the feathers of the head prolonged into a beautiful crest; beak and tarsi black; the throat, the feathers of the nostrils, and a band which passes from the beak through the eye, black; primary quill-feathers brownish-black, each feather being marked on the inner margin of the tip with a yellow line; secondaries tipped with white and having the shaft prolonged and furnished with singular appendages resembling red sealing-wax, whence its name; upper tail-coverts ash-coloured, the under ones ferruginous; tail black tipped with a yellow band.

The male and female offer but slight external differences, both having the wax-like appendages to the secondaries; they are, however, less numerous in the female, and are altogether wanting in the young.

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