## Genus REGULUS, *Cuv.*

Gen. Char. *Beak* very slender, short, straight, slightly compressed laterally; the *upper mandible* slightly laciniated towards the tip. *Nostrils* covered with two recumbent feathers. *Wings* rounded. *Tarsus* longer than the middle toe.

# FIRE-CRESTED WREN.

Regulus ignicapillus, *Briss.*

Le Roitelet à triple bandeau.

The beautiful little birds which compose this genus are distinguished at once by their diminutive size, by the rich golden crown of their heads, and by the minute comb-like feather which covers their nostrils. Although so diminutive, they are a courageous, spirited, hardy, and active family; enduring, even in the cold countries of the North, the severities of the hardest winter. Their habits, food, nidification, the number and colour of their eggs, bring them in close connexion with the Titmice, while their more feeble but sweetly modulated song, and comparatively weak bill indicate their alliance to the *Sylviadæ*, from which combination of characters it may be a matter of doubt whether its true station is among the former or the latter. On this point we leave the reader to form his own conclusions; although, for ourselves, we are inclined to consider its alliance to the Titmice as based upon the most solid grounds.

We have, however, to notice a new claimant in one of the present family, to a place in the Fauna of Great Britain, which has been long known as a continental species under the name of *R. ignicapillus*. The authority we possess for adding this name to the list of British Birds rests not upon our own observation, but upon the testimony of an accurate and attentive observer of nature, the Rev. L. Jenyns, of Swaffham Bulbeck, Cambridgeshire, who exhibited a recent specimen (accidentally killed near his own residence,) before the Committee of Science and Correspondence of the Zoological Society of London, at the meeting of the 14th of August 1832.

If this bird has been hitherto overlooked in England, the omission has arisen from its close similarity to the common species; we have therefore figured both in one Plate, that their differences may be more clearly perceived. The true habitat of the Fire-crested Wren appears to be confined to the southern portions of Europe, being found in abundance in France, Belgium, and the eastern provinces. In its habits, manners, food, and nidification, it strictly resembles the Golden-crested Wren, from which it differs in plumage in the following points. Its crest is more fiery; the sides of the neck and top of the back more tinged with a golden lustre; and in the alternate stripes of black and white, which occupy the sides of the face, both above and below the eye; the under surface is also rather more grey; its size is the same, or as nearly so as possible.

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# GOLDEN-CRESTED WREN.

Regulus vulgaris, *Cuv.*

Le Roitelet ordinaire.

The Golden-crested Wren is the smallest of the European Birds, and is generally dispersed in every region from the Arctic circle to the utmost limit of the warm and sultry regions of the South: in the British Isles it is to be found throughout every district, inhabiting woods, coppices and hedgerows, but especially plantations of Fir and Oak, where they appear to be companions with several of the species of the Tits, particularly *Parus cœruleus* and *ater*, with which they may be generally observed engaged in scrutinizing the highest and outmost branches of trees, clinging with ease and dexterity to the under surface, prying inquisitively into every crevice in search of insects and their larvæ, which, with tender buds and small seeds, constitute their food. We have observed that this species, as well as the Long-tailed Titmouse, which it also sometimes accompanies, is in the habit of traversing with a certain degree of order and regularity considerable extent of district, returning nearly at a given time to the same locality, so as to perform a circuit of several miles in the course of a single day. Their common call, which is constantly repeated as if to keep the family together, is a weak but shrill cry, so closely resembling that of the Creeper (*Certhia familiaris*), as scarcely to be distinguished from it. The song, however, which is poured out at the season of nidification is plaintive, sweet and melodious. It constructs a beautiful little rounded nest of moss and lichens, warmly lined with feathers, which is artfully suspended on the under surface of a fir branch, usually near its extremity, and among the thickest foliage, laying from seven to ten very small eggs of a yellowish white colour.

The plumage of the male is of a uniform olive green on the upper surface, the wing-primaries and the tail being brown; the secondaries barred with black and white; the head is ornamented with a beautiful silky golden crest, with an outward border of black capable of elevation or depression at pleasure; the space between the eye and the base of the beak is white, while in the Fire-crested Wren the same part is black; the whole of the under surface is grey, more or less tinged with olive; the beak black; tarsus greenish yellow.

We have figured a male and female of the Golden-crested Wren, and a male only of the Fire-crested, omitting the female of the latter, as there is no distinguishing characteristic.