

Genus ANTHUS.

GEN. CHAR. *Bill* straight, slender, rather subulated towards the point; the base of the upper mandible carinated, and the tip slightly bent downwards and emarginated; tomia of both mandibles pressed inwards about the middle. *Nostrils* basal, lateral, oval, partly concealed by a membrane. *Tarsi* generally exceeding the middle toe in length. *Toes* three before, and one behind; the outer toe adhering to the middle one as far as the first joint; hind claw more or less produced. *Wings*, the first quill very short, the second rather shorter than the third and fourth, which are of equal length, and the longest: two of the scapulars produced, and equal to the quills in length when the wing is closed.

RICHARD'S PIPIT.

Anthus Richardi, Vieill.

Le Pipit Richard.

WE cannot but observe the near relationship which the birds of this group bear to those of the *Motacillæ*, or Wagtails, particularly that division of them to which the illustrious Cuvier gave the subgeneric title of *Budytes*; to this section they offer a very close resemblance in their general contour, in the lengthened form of their hind claw, and in their habit of frequently raising and depressing the tail, accompanying it at the same time with a lateral expansion of the feathers.

Although we have no certain proof that such is the case, we have some reason to believe that the northern and western regions of Africa constitute the true habitat of the *Anthus Richardi*, and consequently that the individuals which make their appearance within the precincts of Europe at such irregular intervals have been driven hither by some unusual cause; at all events the small number of examples which are recorded to have been captured in Europe is a sufficient proof that this portion of the globe is not its native country. M. Temminck states that it is often met with in Picardy; but the British Islands may, perhaps, be considered among the countries in which it has been most frequently taken, as seldom a year passes without examples falling a prey to the London birdcatchers while in pursuit of the more favourite Goldfinch and Linnet. Independently of the recorded instances of this nature, we know of two that were captured in this way during the spring of 1836, in the immediate neighbourhood of the metropolis, from one of which the present figure is taken.

In its actions the *Anthus Richardi* displays all the activity and alertness of the other members of the genus, among which it will rank as the largest and one of the most typical; it never perches on trees, but is always seen on the ground, where it runs with the greatest rapidity in pursuit of its food, which consists of flies, grasshoppers, and other insects.

Of its nidification nothing is known.

The sexes are alike in plumage, and there is no difference of colouring in summer or winter.

Crown of the head and whole upper surface deep brown, each feather margined with pale brown; stripe above and below the eye pale brown, inclining to buff; throat white, surrounded by a gorget of oblong dark brown spots on a lighter ground; breast and flanks pale brown; abdomen white, slightly tinged with brown; the middle tail-feathers deep brown with paler edges, outer feather on each side almost entirely white, the next having the shaft and base very dark brown and the remainder white; bill pale brown at the base and dark brown at the tip; legs and feet yellowish brown; tarsi long and stout; hind claw much produced and slightly curved.

We have figured a male of the natural size.