

YELLOW WILLOW WREN.

Sylvia icterina, Vieill.

La Bec-fin ictérine.

IN form and colouring this species of Willow Wren so nearly resembles the British members of this interesting group, that it requires an intimate knowledge of its habits, manners, and song to distinguish it from them with any degree of certainty. It is considered as distinct by the continental naturalists; and M. Temminck, in his 'Manuel,' informs us, that "the length of the tail, which is an inch longer than the wings, its forked form, and the comparative length of the quills and tarsi, are characters by which it may be distinguished from the two following species (*S. trochilus* and *S. rufa*); but it is always very difficult to recognise it by the examination of a single individual." To this we may add that the bill is even longer than that of *S. trochilus*, while the wing is quite as short, if not shorter, than that of *S. rufa*.

In a second remark, M. Temminck states that M. Cantraine has killed this species hopping among the reed beds in morasses of Ostia in the month of April; and that he himself has killed several in Holland, where it is less abundant than *S. trochilus*. It also inhabits France and the Roman States, frequenting the neighbourhood of water and morasses. It is probably more abundant than is generally supposed, being frequently confounded with the two species above mentioned.

Its food consists of the small insects and flies, which are attached to the branches and leaves of trees, &c.

Of its nidification and eggs nothing is known.

Crown of the head and all the upper surface pure olive; stripe over the eye bright yellow; sides of the neck, chest, and flanks clear yellow; throat and centre of the belly yellowish white; wings and tail ashy brown bordered with greenish olive; bill and feet brown.

We have figured an adult of the natural size.