SARDINIAN WARBLER.

Curruca melanocephala, *Lath*.

Bec-fin mélanocéphale.

This bird, which is closely allied in habits, manners and plumage to our Black-cap, (Curruca atricapilla,) has hitherto been little known, and is seldom to be met with in ornithological collections. We are able to add but little to M. Temminck's account, who informs us that its localities are very limited, as it appears to be confined to the central parts of Spain, Sardinia, and the Neapolitan States; a circumstance which seems the more probable, as the author has never yet seen it among any of the numerous and extensive collections from different parts of the globe which he has had the opportunity of inspecting.

The specimens from which the accompanying figures are taken were brought from Spain, in 1831, by Captain S. E. Cook, who observed the species to be not uncommon in the neighbourhood of Madrid, and in the interior of the country. By that gentleman they were presented to the Zoological Society of London; and the Author here takes the opportunity of expressing his obligations to the Council and Members, for the permission so kindly allowed of availing himself, on this and other occasions, of the treasures of their Museum. Its food, like that of the Black-cap, consists of flies, the larvæ of insects, and soft berries; but we are unable to say whether or not it is as sweet and charming a songster as our own British species. It builds in low bushes near the ground, the female laying five eggs of a yellowish-white, spotted with a darker colour.

The male and female differ not only in the colour of the head, but also in the general tinge which pervades the plumage. In the male, the forehead, top of the head, and ears are of a deep black; the rest of the upper surface of a dark leaden grey; the quill-feathers tinged with brown; the tail inclining to black, the outer feather on each side having its tip and outer edge dull white; the throat white; the sides grey, becoming lighter on the under surface; the legs light brown; irides brown; beak black, base of the under mandible whitish.

In the female, the top of the head is of a dark leaden grey, like the back of the male; the whole of the upper surface is tinged with olive-brown; the throat white; the sides light russet brown, becoming lighter below; the beak and legs as in the male.

The length is about five inches.

The Plate presents a male and female of the natural size.