## BLUE-THROATED WARBLER.

Phœnicura Suecica, Jardine & Selby. Le Bec-fin gorge bleue.

The scientific authors of "Illustrations in Ornithology" were induced to separate several species of Warblers from the very extensive genus Sylvia of Latham, on account of their general resemblance to our well-known Redstart. The term Phænicura was applied to them as a generic distinction, and several reasons have induced us to adopt the genus, and consider the Blue-throated Warbler as belonging to this new subdivision. The species of this small group appear to be intermediate in their nature between those belonging to the genera Saxicola and Curruca. Like the Wheatear, the Blue-throated Warbler is considered a delicate article of food, and in the vicinity of Alsace numbers are captured for the use of the table; in its habits, in the situation often chosen for its nest, and the colour of its eggs, it exhibits a general resemblance to the Redstart.

The Blue-throated Warbler, somewhat resembling our well-known Robin in its form, is found thinly scattered over the countries of Europe, from Sweden to the Mediterranean, but is most plentiful in the central parts of the Continent. Throughout Germany and the Northern territories it is a migratory bird, like many others of the Warblers, appearing in April, and departing in September. On their arrival they frequent thick hedges, small woods and the borders of forests, building their nests in holes of trees, sometimes in cavities between stones near water, or on the banks of rivulets among roots which the action of the stream has laid bare. The nest is formed of dried bents and moss, with a few dead leaves, and lined with various sorts of hair. The female lays five or six eggs of a delicate pale greenish blue; the male is remarkable for his attention to his mate, and has an agreeable song, which is sometimes heard in the night.

The length of an adult bird is nearly six inches; the top of the head, all the upper parts of the body and wings are uniform clove brown; the beak black; over the eye a pale streak; throat and fore-part of the neck ultramarine blue, with a well-defined spot of pure white in the centre; beneath the blue colour is a black bar, then a narrow line of white, and still lower a broad band of bright chestnut; belly dirty white, flanks and under tail-coverts light reddish brown; the two middle tail-feathers clove brown, throughout their whole length, all the others on both sides have the basal half bright chestnut, the other half black; legs and claws brown. The female resembles the male in the uniform colour of the upper parts; the white patch on the throat, descending from the beak, occupies a much larger space; the blue colour on the sides of the neck is mixed with black; the successive bars of blue, black, white and chestnut towards the bottom of the neck in front are much less perfectly defined; and the belly and flanks more inclined to brown.

The Blue-throated Warbler is rather a rare bird both in the western parts of France and in Holland, still more rare in this country, only one instance of its occurrence being on record. This specimen was shot in May 1826, by Mr. T. Embleton, on the boundary hedge of the Newcastle Town Moor, and by him presented to the Museum of the Literary and Philosophical Society. The first notice of the capture of this interesting addition to our Fauna appeared in a Synopsis of the Newcastle Museum, by G. T. Fox, Esq., of Durham, (pages 298 and 300). This bird was considered a young male, and was probably obtained soon after its arrival.

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We have figured a male and female of the natural size.