

TENGMA LM'S OWL.

Strix Tengmalmi, *Gmel.*

Noctua Tengmalmi, *Selby.*

La Chouette Tengmalm.

IN all probability this little Owl extends its range over the whole of the Arctic Circle, in which inhospitable region it appears to represent the *Noctua nudipes*, a species inhabiting more temperate parts, and with which it has more than once been confounded. The *Noctua Tengmalmi* is abundant in Russia and Norway; it is also found, but more rarely, in Germany and France, and it has been captured two or three times in the British Islands. Mr. Selby mentions one example in particular, which was killed near Morpeth in Northumberland in 1812, and forms a part of that gentleman's collection. In the 'Fauna Boreali-Americana' Dr. Richardson states his belief "that it inhabits all the woody country from Great Slave Lake to the United States. On the banks of the Saskatchewan it is so common that its voice is heard almost every night by the traveller wherever he selects his bivouac. Its cry in the night is a single melancholy note, repeated at intervals of a minute or two; and it is one of the superstitious practices of the Indians to whistle when they hear it. If the bird is silent when thus challenged, the speedy death of the inquirer is augured; hence its Cree appellation of Death-bird.

When it is disturbed or accidentally wanders abroad by day, it is so dazzled by the sun that it becomes stupid, and may be easily taken with the hand.

It is said to build a nest of grass, in holes or clefts about half way up a pine-tree, and to lay two eggs, in the month of May.

The sexes are alike in plumage.

Facial disk greyish white mingled with black, except that portion immediately before and behind the eye, where it is wholly black; crown, nape, and back part of the neck pale brown spotted with white, those on the latter part being the largest, and surrounded with darker brown; back, wing-coverts, and scapularies pale brown spotted with white, the spots on the mantle being nearly concealed by the tips of the feathers; quills pale brown, having on their exterior webs a few oval spots of white forming imperfect bars; the extremities of the outer web of the first quill reverted, of the second for half its length, and of the third only a small portion near the tip; tail pale brown crossed by five rows of white spots, giving it the appearance of being barred; under surface white slightly tinged with buff; tarsi and toes thickly clothed with soft hair-like feathers of a buff colour; bill and irides bright yellow; claws black.

The Plate represents an adult male of the natural size.