GLAREOLA MELANOPTERA, Nordm.

Black-winged Pratincole.

Glareola Nordmannii, Fisch.—Nordm. in Bull. de la Soc. d'Hist. Nat. de Moscou, 1842, p. 314. tab. ii.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. iii. p. 538.

——— Pratincola, Pall. Fauna Rosso-Asiat., tom. ii. p. 150.

— melanoptera, Nordm. Bull. de la Soc. d'Hist. Nat. de Moscou, 1842, p. 314, note.

——— Pallasii, Bruch, Revue 1844, p. lxxxi.

Pratincola Pallasii, Degl. Orn. Eur., tom. ii. p. 110.

The term melanoptera proposed for this species by Nordmann being singularly descriptive of the feature by which it is distinguished from all the other members of the genus, I have determined upon adopting it, although by so doing I may be transgressing the rule of priority, the specific appellation of Nordmannii, assigned to it by M. Fischer de Waldheim, in honour of its discoverer, being probably the name first published.

One of the specimens from which my figures were taken is in the collection of T. C. Eyton, Esq., who received it with some other interesting birds from Persia, from which country I have seen other examples; and we also know that it is found in Asia Minor, and in the southern part of Russia.

The Glareola melanoptera offers a remarkable resemblance to the G. torquata of Europe, both in size and colouring, with the single exception that the under surface of the wing instead of being rufous is inky black, and hence the appropriateness of the name I have adopted.

Unfortunately, nothing whatever has been recorded of its habits, but we may reasonably infer that in these respects it as closely assimilates to the other members of the genus, as it does in its form and general style of colouring.

Head, back, scapularies, wing-coverts and tertiaries olive-brown; on the sides and back of the neck a wash of rufous; eye-lash beset with white feathers; lores black; throat buffy white surrounded by a narrow line of deep black, which is somewhat broken or interrupted on the breast; breast pale olive-brown; primaries, secondaries, under surface of the wing and the lengthened flank-feathers black; shaft of the first primary white both on the upper and under surface, the shafts of the remaining primaries white on the under surface only; abdomen, upper and under tail-coverts white; central tail-feathers olive-brown; the under white with black tips, all but the outer one on each side with the black bordered with olive-brown; irides brown; bill black; gape yellow; legs and feet olive.

The figures represent the two sexes of the natural size.