PYRRHULA ORIENTALIS, Temm. et Schleg.

Oriental Bullfinch.

Pyrrhula Orientalis, Temm. et Schleg. Fauna Japonica, p. 91. pl. liii.—Bonap. Consp. Gen Av. p. 525. Pyrrhula, sp. 3.

"Japan produces a Bullfinch resembling in size the smaller race of the European Bullfinches, and which seems to be distinguished from them by the colour of the under surface only, which instead of being of the same bright red as the region of the ears, is ashy-grey, lightly tinged with red during the breeding season; we observe also that the bands on the wings incline much more strongly to ashy-grey, and that the anterior portion of the secondaries is of a uniform black instead of presenting a red spot or stain like that seen in the Common Bullfinch. The relative proportions of the wing-feathers are precisely the same, and the dimensions of the different parts present no difference from those of the common species."

The above passage is taken from Dr. Siebold's "Fauna Japonica," the text of which is by Messrs. Temminck and Schlegel. In this work both the varieties of the male bird are figured, but my own Collection containing only a single male, in what is considered to be the summer dress, I am unable to give a representation of the bird in the other state mentioned. After carefully comparing the Japanese bird with Bull-finches killed in our own island, no doubt remains in my mind as to its specific value; and I may remark, that it is very interesting to find in the fauna of so distant a country as Japan, as well as in several parts of China, well-marked representatives of many species comprised in our own. In size, the Japanese bird somewhat exceeds its British prototype; on the other hand, it is at all times less brilliant in colour; their other distinctions are so clearly pointed out in the passage above quoted, that it is not necessary to repeat them.

The sexes present the usual differences of colour, and I observe that the female is of a somewhat darker hue than the female of the British species.

The male has the crown of the head, back of the neck and face, deep black; upper surface grey, slightly tinged with red; lesser wing-coverts and apical half of the greater wing-coverts brownish grey, forming two distinct bands across the wings, which are black; rump white; upper tail-coverts and tail black; throat and ear-coverts red; breast and under surface grey washed with red; vent and under tail-coverts white; irides dark hazel; bill black; feet flesh-colour.

In the winter season the wash of red disappears from the under surface, leaving that part ashy-grey.

The female has the crown of the head black, the back greyish-brown, and all the under surface grey tinged with red; in other respects she resembles the male.

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The plate represents the two sexes of the size of life.