# CARPODACUS RUBICILLA.

## Caucasian Grosbeak.

*Loxia rubicilla*, Güld. Nov. Comm. Petrop., tom. xix. p. 464. pl. 12.—Gmel. Edit. Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 846. —Lath. Ind. Orn., tom. i. p. 372.—Daud. Orn., tom. ii. p. 387.—Shaw, Gen. Zool., vol. ix. p. 245.
*Coccothraustes Caucasicus*, Pall. Zoog., tom. ii. p. 13. No. 183.
*Pyrrhula (Corythus) Caucasica*, Keys. und Blas. Wirb. Europ., pp. xl. et 158.
*Carpodacus rubicilla*, Bonap. et Schlegel, Mon. des Loxiens, p. 23. pl. 26.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 252, *Carpodacus*, sp. 5.
*Strobilophaga Caucasica*, Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. ii. p. 387, *Strobilophaga*, sp. 2.
*Caucasian Grosbeak*, Lath. Gen. Syn., tom. iii. p. 112.—Ib. Gen. Hist., vol. v. p. 219.

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This is by far the largest species of the genus *Carpodacus* yet discovered. Its native habitat is the alpine districts of Thibet and the more northern regions of the Caucasus and the Altai, from all of which countries I possess examples. In size they do not differ from each other, but the Thibetian specimens are much lighter in colour than the Caucasian: this trifling difference is, however, in my opinion not of sufficient importance to be considered other than a local variation, caused in all probability by a difference of climate. The lighter-coloured figure in the accompanying Plate represents a male specimen received from India; the darker-coloured, another of the same sex which has reached me, through the hands of H. E. Strickland, Esq., who obtained it from St. Petersburg.

As is the case with the other members of the genus, much dissimilarity exists in the colouring of the sexes, as will be seen on reference to the figures.

Latham in his "General History of Birds" states, that in the colder parts of the Caucasian mountains it frequents the stony hollows, and feeds principally upon the berries of the sea buckthorn (*Hippophaë rhamnoides*, Linn.), a plant growing there in abundance, and which by swallowing the berries whole the bird often propagates; that it is frequently seen in vast flocks, and that its note is not unlike that of a bullfinch.

The male has the crown of the head, the nape, back, wing-coverts, scapularies and upper tail-coverts of a beautiful pale rosy grey, the rosy tint predominating on the margins of the wing- and tail-coverts; forehead, ear-coverts and throat shining white, bordered with carmine-red; throat, breast and abdomen carmine-red, with a triangular spot of shining white at the tip of each feather, giving it a spangled appearance; under tail-coverts pale carmine-red; rump carmine-red; primaries, secondaries and tail brownish black, narrowly edged with reddish; upper mandible dark brown, under mandible fleshy horn-colour; feet dark brown.

General plumage of the female pale brown, still lighter beneath, the feathers of both the upper and under surface streaked down the centre with dark brown; primaries and secondaries brown edged with pale brown; bill and feet as in the male.

In the male from Siberia the white marks are larger, and the red tint not so deep, producing a much lighter colouring.

The Plate represents both the dark and light coloured males, and a female of the natural size.