MONTIFRINGILLA ARCTOA.

Northern Mountain Finch.

Passer arctous, Pall. Zoog., tom. ii. p. 21. No. 191.
Fringilla (Linaria) arctoa, Brandt, Bull. des Acad. Sci. de St. Pétersb., Feb. 3, 1843.
——— *arctoa*, Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. ii. p. 372, *Fringilla*, sp. 63.
Montifringilla arctoa, Bonap. et Schl. Mon. des Loxiens, p. 38. pls. 44 and 45.

As is the case with most of the Siberian birds, little is known of the habits and economy of the Northern Mountain Finch; I have therefore the greater pleasure in transcribing the following brief notes on the subject from the "Monographie des Loxiens" of my friends Bonaparte and Schlegel:—

"This species, of which examples are to be seen in most of our collections, inhabits nearly the whole of Siberia; we have specimens which had been killed on the mountains bordering the River Obi, upon the Aleutian Islands, and upon the Kuriles. Pallas states that it is found in the polar regions of Siberia, and that it only visits the central parts of that vast country in winter; at which season it frequents the villages in pairs, mingled with wandering flocks of linnets. Not being able to support the heat, it returns towards the northern regions from the end of the month of February to the commencement of May. Steller met with it in the month of December upon Behring's Island. It is a stupid bird and easily captured; when pursued it thrusts its head in the grass, and believing itself in safety, allows itself to be taken by the hand. It feeds principally upon the seeds of the *Umbelliferæ*."

The male has the head brownish grey, each feather bordered with black; nape, back and sides of the neck light reddish brown; back, scapularies, under surface and the lesser wing-coverts dark brown, washed on the flanks with purple, and the feathers of the breast with greyish tips; outer margin of the wing-feathers pearly grey, their tips and inner webs very dark brown; upper tail-coverts and tail pearly grey passing into black at the tip, and with black shafts; bill and feet black.

The plumage of the winter season is similar in colour, but is destitute of the purple wash on the flanks; and the bill is wax-yellow, except at the point.

The female is distinguished from the male by her paler colouring, the general plumage being of a greyish brown, except on the back, which is yellowish brown streaked with dark brown.

The Plate represents the two sexes of the natural size.