TAB. XXXVI.

NUCIFRAGA HEMISPILA.

Nuc. castaneo-brunnea; capite subtus, collo anteriori, dorso, pectoreque albo maculatis; capite summo, alis, rectricibusque intensè brunneis; his, duabus mediis exceptis, ad apicem latè albis.

Longitudo *corporis*, 14 unc.

UNTIL the present bird was discovered, a single species constituted the peculiar and isolated genus *Nucifraga*. Closely related to the European *Nucifraga caryocatactes* (Nutcracker), yet differing in its larger body and less proportioned beak, and in having the spots confined to the upper part of the plumage, while the breast and belly are in the British bird equally covered with them, the *N. hemispila* may be considered as one of those remarkable objects of nature, which, with a decided identity of form and character, but with slight though permanent distinctions, are placed in remote countries as respective representations of the same group.

Like its European congener, the habits of the present bird lead it to choose thick woods as its habitation, where it feeds on the larger species of insects, worms, &c., as well as fruits. By its frequent occurrence in the collection it may be supposed a bird by no means uncommon.

The top of the head is deep brown; the back, sides of the neck, cheeks and under parts, dull chestnut, spotted, especially on the cheeks and sides of the neck, with white; the wings are black; the two middle tail-feathers are also black, the two next tipped with white, the rest white having a black base; the bill and tarsi are black.

The Plate represents an adult of the natural size.