

Marsh, is a beautiful marine garden of this kind : here the stonecrop is in perfection, interspersed among acres of purple thrift and foxglove, growing on beds of stone, sand, and shells many miles in extent. This interesting part of our coast, with the prominent lighthouse at the apex, and the town of Lydd at the base of the triangle, and numerous freshwater pools, frequented in summer by thousands of Black-headed Gulls, in the centre, will be duly appreciated by every naturalist who has an opportunity of visiting it.

As is the case with the other Terns, the sexes of the Common species are alike in colour ; but they differ considerably in size, the female being much smaller than her mate. Both have jet-black crowns in summer—a colour which is confined to the nape in winter. At all seasons the beautiful orange tint of their bills, feet, and legs affords a conspicuous contrast to the delicate hues of their plumage.

I have more than once spent a pleasant hour watching this species fishing in the canals of Holland, where they are evidently regarded as friends, since they are never molested by any one. I have even seen them in the very streets of Leyden performing their usual elegant turns and actions within a few feet of the houses, or dropping like a stone into the dirty water, whence they generally rose with a glittering fish, which they bore away to their young on the beach at Scheveling, the sand-hills on the coast, or the margin of some of the inland waters of that flat marshy country. That it does breed inland as well as on the coast is proved by the following passage from Thompson's 'Natural History of Ireland':—"When at Fort Lough, a small lake or tarn on the north-west of Donegal, on the 29th of June 1832, I was conveyed in a 'corragh' to its two islands, where this species, with several of its nests containing eggs, was observed. The nests were placed among loose stones, and all composed of the common reed (*Arundo phragmitis*) and *Equiseta*, both of which grow on the islet. On visiting Ram's Island, in Lough Neagh, on the 15th of June 1833, for the purpose of ascertaining what species of Gulls and Terns breed on the narrow strip of land adjoining it, I found the Tern to be the Common one, of which there were considerable numbers ; but having killed three, required as specimens, they were no further disturbed. Several of their nests were seen, none of which contained more than three eggs—the usual number. I looked particularly to these with reference to the determination of the species from the eggs alone, as we can frequently find them when the birds will not come sufficiently near for identification. Some consider the egg to be rather larger and more round in form than those of the Arctic Tern, and these were certainly about the roundest Tern's eggs I had ever seen. This character may therefore be generally correct, though the difference between the eggs of the two species is by no means well defined. Sir William Jardine has remarked that the Common Tern seems to prefer, for a breeding-place, a shingly beach or low-lying ground to rocky islands. My observation agrees with this as a general remark ; but it is far from being of universal application. The Common Tern is more cosmopolite than any of the others, breeding in localities of various kinds, both about fresh water and the sea."

The eggs are yellowish stone-colour, spotted and blotched with dark grey and reddish brown ; they are one inch and eight lines in length by one inch and two lines in breadth.

The Plate represents a female in the breeding-plumage, with two young birds about three days old, all of the natural size. The principal plants are the Stonecrop (*Sedum Anglicum*) and reduced masses of the Common Thrift (*Armeria maritima*) of our garden-borders.