

## HARELDA GLACIALIS.

### Long-tailed Duck.

*Anas glacialis*, Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 203.

— *hyemalis*, Linn. Faun. Suec., p. 44.

— *longicauda*, Leach, Syst. Cat. of Indig. Mamm. and Birds in Brit. Mus. p. 37.

*Pagonetta glacialis*, Kaup, Natürl. Syst. p. 66.

*Crymonessa glacialis*, Macg. Man. of Nat. Hist., Orn., vol. ii. p. 186.

*Harelda glacialis*, Steph. Cont. of Shaw's Gen. Zool., vol. xii. p. 175, pl. 58.

*Clangula glacialis*, Boie, Isis, 1822, p. 564.

---

DURING the months of summer the Long-tailed Duck frequents the northern regions of Europe, Asia, Greenland, and America, but on the approach of autumn bids farewell for a short period to the land of its birth, and gradually wends its way to the southward; some proceeding to European seas, others to China and Japan, while others, again, wander along the eastern and western coast-lines of America, their progress southward being accelerated or retarded by the nature of the season or the state of the weather; seldom, however, do even solitary individuals proceed so far as the latitudes of the Mediterranean, the Island of Maderia, or the Azores. Scotland, Ireland, and England, lying in the direct line of migration, naturally come in for a full share of visitors; but, as might be expected, the northern parts of our islands are more often favoured with its presence than the southern and western; hence, in the Orkneys, the Shetlands, and in all the armllets of the sea on the eastern side of Scotland, from the mouths of the most northern rivers and Cromarty Bay to the Firth of Forth on the east, and the Clyde on the west, the Longtailed Duck may be seen in such numbers, during the months of autumn, winter, and early spring, as to render the word common an appropriate term. Further south than this (for instance, the coasts of Norfolk and Suffolk, and the opposite ones of Lancashire and Wales) it gradually becomes more scarce, and it is only in rigorous winters and at stormy periods that the bird is found in Cornwall and Devonshire. What has been said with regard to the bird's movements in Britain, holds good in all countries of a similar latitude. With us, of course, it does not breed; but in Iceland, Spitsbergen, Nova Zembla, Greenland, Hudson's Bay, and doubtless in northern Siberia it nidifies and rears its young. Those persons who are acquainted with the Mallard (*Anas boschas*) must, as a matter of course, have remarked the changes of plumage which take place in the male after the breeding-season, and have noticed that, having performed the duty of reproduction, he throws off his beautiful green head-dress and short curly tail-feathers, and dons a plumage differing but little from that of his spouse, which he continues to wear until the young are able to fly. Another change then takes place; and by November the Drake is again beautifully attired, and only requires the heightening of the wax-yellow colouring of the bill and the acquisition of the rich glossy green tint on the head to render his appearance sufficiently attractive to enable him to again leave his bachelor life and seek a mate for the ensuing summer. Now this mode of life and a similar transformation of plumage is more or less common to all the members of the *Anatide*, whether it be the gaily coloured and richly ornamented Mandarin Duck of China, or the Little Teal of our own islands. In winter and spring the males of those species are conspicuously different from the females; but in summer the sexes can scarcely be distinguished except by dissection. The Long-tailed Duck is similarly metamorphosed at opposite seasons of the year, but, unlike all other Ducks, is as beautiful, although of a different colour, at one season as at another, the plumage of both sexes undergoing a total change, so that they have a dress common to both in summer, and another equally common to both in winter, the only differences being, that the long central tail-feathers and the large crest of the mature male, shown in the front figure of the accompanying Plate, are never seen in the female. In summer the male has the long tail-feathers and a rich chestnut, grey, and black dress: the female has the same colours; but being destitute of the ornamental tail-feathers, her appearance is that of a dumpy short-tailed Duck. From what has been said it will be apparent that the bird is rarely seen in its summer dress in this country; indeed the numerous notes kindly sent to me by Mr. Stevenson and others, as well as the evidence of all previous writers, tend to prove that it seldom, if ever, occurs here at that season.

The somewhat flattened tarsi, large hind toe, and broad interdigital membranes of the Long-tailed Hareld, as it is sometimes called, clearly indicate that it is one of the diving Ducks, and that it descends to the bottom for its food, consisting of mollusks, crustaceans, sea-worms, and other lowly organized inhabitants of the deep. When it accidentally ascends our rivers or resorts to our freshwater lakes and meres, it is out of its place, far removed from its own element, which is low down the tide-way in the brackish salt water.