

The food consists of mollusks, fish, worms, and aquatic plants.

Mr. Blyth assures me that the crest is capable of erection to the extent I have represented, and that in this state it forms a most beautiful appendage, and adds greatly to the beauty of the bird, especially in the breeding-season, when the bill becomes of a bright orange-red.

On reference to the opposite Plate, it will at once be seen how greatly the two sexes differ in colour and ornamentation, the female having the crest less developed and being devoid of the body-tints which render the male so conspicuous.

Could I have furnished a more detailed account of this bird, I should have had much pleasure in so doing; but unfortunately the peculiarities of its habits and economy seem to be entirely unknown. Mr. Eyton appears to have considered it to be allied to the Mergansers, and therefore proposed for it the generic name of *Mergoides*; and certainly the form of the bill and crest would induce most persons to entertain the same opinion; but a further examination of the structure of the bird would show that it does not belong to the *Merginæ*.

The following descriptions of the two sexes are from the pen of Mr. Jerdon, a gentleman who has had ample opportunities of observing the bird in a state of nature—an advantage I have not enjoyed.

“Male:—head, cheeks, throat, and upper part of the neck reddish bay; the feathers on the crown elongated and of a silky texture, forming a crest somewhat paler than the rest of the head; back, wings, and tail yellowish brown; the bend of the wing, a large spot on each side of the back, the speculum, the base of the primary quills, and the flanks white; lower part of the neck, breast, and abdomen deep black; bill bright vermilion-red, the tip white; irides red; legs orange-red.

“The female has the upper parts yellowish brown, darker on the head and neck, and the crest less developed; half of the speculum greyish white, the other pale-brown; base of the quills white, tinged with brown; breast and flanks yellowish brown; belly grey; bill and feet reddish brown.”

The Plate represents the two sexes, of the natural size.