

previously, was a range of cliffs more than twelve miles distant. This was in May 1856."—*Ibis*, 1860, p. 81.

In Mr. O. Salvin's 'Five Months' Birds'-nesting in the Eastern Atlas,' it is stated that "though this bird is numerous on all the salt lakes of the elevated plains, its egg is one of the most difficult to obtain. One nest only rewarded our labours. The rarity of the eggs is hardly surprising when the situation chosen by this bird for its nest is considered. It selects a hole or crevice of a cliff for its breeding-place, and associates with the Raven, the Black Kite, and Egyptian Vulture during the period of the reproduction of its young. Almost immediately on encamping at Ain Djendeli we used daily to see a pair of Ruddy Sheldrakes pass over our tent, their direction always being backwards and forwards between the cliffs to the south of us, and the small marsh between us and the lake. After careful investigation, the nest was discovered to be in a hole in the face of a rock, which required all the skill of Mohamed, and all our appliances of ropes &c., to reach. The result was four hard-set eggs, which are now in the collections of Messrs. Tristram, Simpson, Wolley, and myself. Though the Arabs were aware of the habits of the bird, we did not succeed in obtaining any more."—*Ibis*, 1859, p. 362.

In Palestine Mr. Tristram found the *Casarea rutila* near the Dead Sea, and obtained its eggs in a cliff in Northern Galilee, among some Griffons' (*Vultur fulvus*) nests in May.

The late Mr. Strickland says it is frequently to be seen in the poultry-shops at Smyrna; and Messrs. Dickson and Ross state that it is abundant at Erzeroum, frequenting the marshes during the daytime, and feeding late in the evening and early in the morning in corn- and stubble-fields—that it arrives about the middle of March, and departs at the end of November; they also remark that it is rarely seen on the water.

"The Ruddy Sheldrake, or Brahminy Duck, as it is called in India," says Mr. Jerdon, "is a well-known winter visitant to all parts of the country. It is generally seen, even at this season, in pairs or small parties, frequenting alike rivers, brooks, jheels, and lakes. It walks well on the ground, and grazes in the young corn-fields, just like Geese; it also picks up seeds of grass, grain, &c. Towards the close of the cold weather the Brahminy Ducks assemble in numbers, and on the Chilka Lake I have seen thousands in one flock in April. The call is peculiar and Goose-like (resembling a clarionet, says Pallas), sounding something like *à-oung*, and hence the name of *Aangir*, which, according to Pallas, is given to this bird among the Mongols." Mr. Yarrell says that this sound is uttered while the bird is flying, and that at other times it cries like a Peacock, especially when kept confined, and that it now and then clucks like a hen. Dr. Jerdon says, "The Hindoos have a legend that two lovers, for some indiscretion, were transformed into Brahminy Ducks, that they were condemned to pass the night apart from each other on opposite banks of the river, and that all night long, each in its turn, asks its mate if it shall come across, but the question is always met by a negative:—'Chakwa, shall I come?' 'No Chakwi.' 'Chakwi, shall I come?' 'No Chakwa.'"—*Birds of India*, vol. iii. p. 792.

Captain L. H. Irby, in his 'Notes on Birds observed in Oudh and Kumaon,' says, "The Ruddy Sheldrake (*Casarea rutila*), Brahminy Duck of Europeans, the *Chukwa* of the natives, probably so called from its cry," is "very common in the cold season on the large rivers and lakes, but is seldom seen on the small jheels, except in the vicinity of rivers. During the day, immense flocks rest on the sand-banks of rivers, and towards dusk break up into pairs and disperse in various directions. Should one bird be killed, its mate will not leave the spot, but continue flying round for some time, calling repeatedly. It is a shame to shoot them, as their flesh is proverbial for its dryness and other bad qualities. There is a strange Hindoo legend about the *Chukwa*, the pith of which is, that any person who kills one is for ever after doomed to celibacy."—*Ibis*, 1861, p. 249.

The food of the Ruddy Sheldrake consists of aquatic plants and their seeds, insects, the fry of fish, grain, &c. They lay eight or nine creamy white eggs; and when the young ones come forth, the mother will often carry them, from the place of hatching to the water, in her bill.

The above passages comprise all the information of interest on record respecting this bird. I am aware that it might have been compressed into two or three paragraphs; but I have thought it only an act of justice to the various writers to let each speak for himself. I have only to add that there is but little difference in the outward appearance of the sexes; perhaps a lighter-coloured head and the absence of the black ring from the neck of the female are the only ones; and I am not certain that in the latter this is constant.

The Plate represents the two sexes, nearly of the size of life.