

Snipe, was on a hummocky tuft of grass. Although I found the young only half fledged the last week in July, and hunted the morasses very carefully, I never flushed or saw a single old bird; yet undoubtedly they must have been there; so difficult is it at that period to get them on the wing, and so entirely different from their habits in the spring. They are said by Nilsson to be rare visitants to Scandinavia; they are, however, numerously dispersed, but from their small size and hiding habits are difficult to be discovered, added to the almost impassable nature of the swamps they frequent. There were several small colonies of them in different parts of the extensive swamp at Fogstuen; I procured five specimens there, and might have obtained as many more, had I desired it. I also procured one nest with four eggs in it."

The following notes were communicated to Mr. Hewitson by the late Mr. John Wolley:—

"The Broad-billed Sandpiper differs from other wading birds in the situation of its nest: choosing open soft places in the marsh, where there is little else than bog-moss, with a light growth of a kind of sedge, and on a low tuft just rising above the water, its nest may be found often without difficulty . . . But it must not be supposed that this kind of bird-nesting is very easy work. The marshes where the Broad-billed Sandpiper is to be found are few and far between; they are soft and full of water, and often every step is a struggle; while the swarms of hungry gnats require almost individual attention. The sun is scorching at midday, but at midnight has not enough power to keep away an unpleasant chill. The country to be gone over is of vast extent, the egg-season very short; sleep is seldom attainable, a feverish feeling comes on, and present enjoyment soon ceases.

"It is about the third week in June or just before midsummer, when the thickest clouds of gnats rise from the water which is so generally spread over the recently thawed land, that the Broad-billed Sandpiper lays its eggs. Many empty nests are found for one that is occupied; and these I suppose to be nests of former years; for the moss in which they are usually worked long retains any marks made in it, being hard frozen for more than half the year. They are neatly rounded hollows, and have a few bits of grass at the bottom. The bird sometimes flies and sometimes runs off her eggs, and, if she has sat for a day or two, will come back even whilst men are standing all round. The eggs are usually very deeply and richly coloured when fresh, but they fade sadly soon after they are blown. As Swedish ornithologists consider the Broad-billed Sandpiper to be an accidental visitor to their country, I suppose its breeding-grounds to be confined to this far northern region."

Mr. Hewitson has figured two eggs selected from a numerous series by Mr. Wolley as characteristic of those of the species, and remarks that they "bear no resemblance whatever, except in shape, to the eggs of any of the Sandpipers with which we are acquainted, and in their singular colouring are unlike the eggs of any other bird." They are represented of a chocolate-red, largely blotched and freckled with a darker tint of the same colour, particularly on the larger half; in one these markings are more sharply defined and on a lighter surface than in the other. One measures rather more than an inch and an eighth in length by seven eighths in breadth; the other, which is somewhat more pyriform, one inch and a quarter by seven eighths.

Mr. Jerdon informs us that this bird is tolerably common towards the north of India, but is rare in the south, and that it abounds more on the sea-coasts and on tidal rivers than far inland.

Mr. Swinhoe mentions that, at Foochow, this and several allied species are seen on the coast in September, chiefly on their way to more southerly regions, to pass up again in March, or in the beginning of April, and are often found in those months by inland salt marshes. In Formosa, flocks were frequently met on the south-west shores, in September. Most of those he procured were in partial summer-plumage, with more or less freckled breasts.

In summer, the prevailing tint of the upper surface is blackish brown, interrupted on the head and occiput by two obscure longitudinal narrow bands of sandy brown, and by the margins of the feathers on the body and wings being margined with mingled dull white and buff; over the eye a broad stripe of greyish white, below which, between the bill and eye, is a narrow one of black; greater wing-coverts and secondaries edged with white; primaries blackish brown, with white shafts; lengthened tertiaries, margined with rufous; two central tail-feathers blackish brown, margined externally at the tip with rufous; the remainder light greyish brown, narrowly edged with white, and having white shafts; chin greyish white; sides of the neck, breast, and flanks dark, or blackish brown, each feather margined with greyish white and tawny, giving a spotted appearance; abdomen and under tail-coverts white, each feather of the latter with an oblong mark of brown near the tip; bill black, becoming reddish at the base; gular pouch reddish flesh-colour; irides brown; legs and feet olive.

In winter the general tint is ashy grey, all the feathers being largely margined with that colour, and the dark centres of the feathers of the sides of the neck, breast, and flanks assume the form of small striæ.

The Plate represents two birds in summer-, and one in winter-plumage. The lichen is the *Peltidea canina*, formerly believed to be a cure for hydrophobia.