

Although it would scarcely be of interest to enumerate the localities in which the Dunlin is found in the British Islands (so general is its distribution therein), it will be desirable to give the extent of its range over other countries, which I am able to do with some degree of accuracy. Besides being met with at one or other season of the year in all parts of Europe, it occurs in Iceland, and in so many places in Africa as to induce the belief that it is distributed over the whole of that vast continent. We know that it is equally numerous in Asia: I have in my own collection specimens from Japan, the Malay peninsula, and India. The bird of this form which is found in North America is considered by some naturalists to be identical with our own; and even Prof. Baird, in his recently published list of the birds of that country, enumerates it as variety *Americana*. I must, however, remark that American examples are always larger than European, and that those from Japan differ in a similar manner; but the variation in size is not, in my opinion, sufficient to constitute a species. It is probable that the Dunlin does not breed in any southern country, and that the northern hemisphere is generally resorted to for the purpose of reproduction, its southern limit being the latitude of the central parts of England, and its northern far within the Arctic circle, whence proceed the greater part of the vast flocks so universally spread over our shores and those of other countries in winter. From no southern country, so far as I recollect, are examples ever sent in the summer livery, *i. e.* with black breasts and richly variegated backs.

The sexes are alike; or if there be any difference, the female is less highly coloured in summer than the male; she is also a trifle larger in size, has a longer bill, and stands somewhat higher upon her legs.

During the spring of the present year, Mr. Gatcombe, of Plymouth, very kindly sent me twelve Dunlins for examination; and in every instance the females were the largest and heaviest—the average weight being $1\frac{3}{4}$ oz., and the female 2 oz. These twelve birds afforded me an opportunity of taking admeasurements of the various parts of their structure, and of making a minute comparison of the sexes: the results, which I carefully noted down at the time, fully confirm what I have above stated; but it is unnecessary to give the details, the bird being so well known.

The nesting-place is merely a depression in the ground, with the addition occasionally of a few materials so slight as to be unworthy of the name of a nest. The eggs, which are pointed in form and rich in marking, are four in number. The chicks or fledglings run about nimbly the day they are excluded from the shell, and are surpassingly pretty, as will be seen on reference to the accompanying Plate.

The flesh as an article of diet is very inferior to that of the Snipe; still many thousands are annually sent to the markets of the Metropolis and other large towns of this and other countries.

“About the second week in July,” says St. John, “the shore and sands are enlivened by vast flocks, or rather clouds, of Dunlins, Ring-Dotterels, and other birds of the same kind, which now coming down from their scattered breeding-places collect in immense companies. When the tide ebbs, all these birds are employed in searching for the minute shell-fish and animalcula upon which they feed; and vast indeed must be the supply required. About the lochs and swamps the young Snipes and Redshanks begin to fly, and, with wild ducks, afford plenty of shooting.” (Tour in Sutherlandshire, vol. i. p. 247.)

Macgillivray states that “the Dunlins breed in great numbers on the heaths of many parts of Scotland and its larger islands, where they may be found scattered in the haunts selected by the Golden Plovers, with which they are so frequently seen in company that they have popularly obtained the name of Plovers’ Pages. Sometimes about the middle of April, but always before that of May, they are seen dispersed over the moors, in pairs, like the birds just named, which at this season they greatly resemble in manners. From this period until August, none are to be found along the shores of the sea, instead of searching which they now seek for insects and worms in the shallow pools, soft ground, and by the edges of lakes and marshes. The male frequently flies up to a person intruding upon his haunts, and sometimes endeavours to entice him away by feigning lameness.

“The nest, which is composed of some bits of withered grass or sedge, and small twigs of heath, is placed in a slight hollow, generally on a bare spot, and usually in a dry place like that selected by the Golden Plover. The eggs—always four in number—are ovato-pyriform, an inch and four- or five-twelfths in length, eleven-twelfths or a little more in breadth, and have a light greyish-green, or sometimes greenish-yellow or brownish ground, irregularly marked all over with spots and patches of sombre brown and light purplish grey, more numerous toward the larger end, where they are confluent. The female sits very assiduously, often allowing a person to come quite close to her before removing, which she does in a fluttering and cowering manner.”

In this country we very frequently find Dunlins of a small size, but not different in colour or markings, from those ordinarily met with. These, which are doubtless the *Tringa schinzii* of Brehm, must, in my opinion, be regarded merely as a variety, and not as distinct.

The first Plate represents the Dunlin in its winter dress; the second the bird and young as it appears in summer. The plant is the *Pinguicula vulgaris*, kindly sent to me by the Rev. H. Harpur Crewe.