

LIMNOCINCLUS PECTORALIS.

Pectoral Sandpiper.

Tringa maculata, Vieill. Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat., tom. xxxiv. p. 465.

—— *pectoralis*, Say, in Long's Exped., vol. i. p. 171.

—— *campestris*, Licht. Verz. der Doubl., p. 74.

Pelidna pectoralis, Bonap. Geog. and Comp. List of Birds of Eur. and N. Amer., p. 50.

—— *maculata*, Bonap. Tabl. des Echass., Compt. Rend. de l'Acad. Sci., tom. xliii., séances des 15 et 22 Sept. 1856.

Tringa (Actodromas) maculata, Baird, Cat. of N. Amer. Birds in Mus. Smiths. Inst., p. xlvii. no. 531.

Limnocinclus pectoralis, Gould, Handb. Birds of Aust., vol. ii. p. 254.

I HOPE my fellow-labourers in the field of ornithological science will coincide with me in retaining Say's specific name of *pectoralis* for this species of Sandpiper, in lieu of the prior but inappropriate one of *maculatus* assigned to it by Vieillot—more especially as it is commonly known, both in its native country (America) and in England, by the trivial name of Pectoral Sandpiper. In the second volume of my 'Handbook to the Birds of Australia,' I have instituted the genus *Limnocinclus* for the reception of this species and the old *Tringa acuminata* of Horsfield, better known as the *T. australis* of Jardine and Selby, a bird which so nearly resembles the Pectoral Sandpiper in its winter plumage that it is only by the discriminating eye of the ornithologist they can be distinguished the one from the other; in the summer plumage, however, they are very different.

Although several examples of the *L. pectoralis* have been killed in the British Islands, they can only be regarded as accidental visitors, individuals which have strayed over to this country, probably from America, where it ranges far and wide, from the tropics, through Mexico, Texas, and the United States, to Hudson's Bay; the Rev. H. B. Tristram has also killed it in Bermuda. The recorded notices of the Pectoral Sandpiper are, unfortunately, of no great interest; but such as they are they will be found below: in the meanwhile I would observe that I have at this moment before me several specimens in their full nuptial dress, and that there is another, finer still, in the collection at the British Museum. In this state I notice that the breast-feathers are much more lengthened than in winter, and have the spots with which they are adorned more sharply defined. These feathers the bird doubtless puffs out when endeavouring to attract the notice of the females; indeed we have reason to believe that the entire chest is then distended, after the manner of the Bustard and the domestic Pouter Pigeon, Mr. G. R. Gray having laid before the meeting of the Zoological Society of London, held on the 22nd of March, 1859, a drawing of this species made by the late Mr. Adams, Surgeon of H.M.S. 'Enterprise,' representing the bird thus inflated, and remarked that, from the correctness of the other drawings made by the same gentleman, he had no doubt he had observed this singular phenomenon in the specimen from which the drawing was taken. "The drawing was more especially placed before the Members in the hopes of learning whether such a singularity of habits had been noticed before in this or any other of the *Tringæ*." In winter the spots on the breast are not seen, their place being occupied by longitudinal striæ.

From a paper by the late J. D. Hoy, published in the 'Magazine of Natural History,' new series, vol. i. p. 115, we learn that the first occurrence of the Pectoral Sandpiper in England was "noticed, and a plate given, by Eyton in his Continuation of Bewick's 'Birds.' It was killed on the 17th of October, 1830, on the borders of Breydon Broad, an extensive sheet of water near Yarmouth, rather celebrated for the numerous rare birds which have, at different times, been observed and shot on its banks and waters. The person who killed it remarked that it was solitary, and its note was new to him, which induced him to shoot it. It proved, on dissection, to be a female." Dr. Edward Clarke informed Mr. Yarrell that another had been shot very near Hartlepool, in October 1841.

In a note from Mr. H. Stevenson, of Norwich, dated January 29, 1868, that gentleman says:—"I send you the dates of Mr. Gurney's and my Pectoral Sandpipers, as you requested. Mr. Gurney's was shot near Yarmouth, on the 30th of September, 1853; he had an opportunity of examining it in the flesh, and on dissection it proved to be a female and apparently a bird of the year; it was not fat, but in very fair condition. Its stomach contained some small seeds and the remains of a few insects, too much mutilated to be recognizable. Mine was shot at Caistor, near Yarmouth, on the 16th of September, 1865. It was brought in the flesh to one of our bird-stuffers, from whom I purchased it." Only last week, Dr. Lowe, of Lynn, sent me, to examine, not knowing what it was, another Pectoral Sandpiper, which had been netted in Terrington Marsh; it is now in the Lynn Museum. This also was a female and a young bird of the last year; the spots on the breast were very small, none of them transverse; a few new feathers, with rufous edgings, were making their appearance. This is the fourth authenticated Norfolk specimen.