

STREPSILAS INTERPRES.

Turnstone.

- Tringa interpres*, Linn. Faun. Suec., p. 63.
—— *morinella*, Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 249.
Strepsilas interpres, Ill. Prod. Syst. Mamm. et Av., p. 263.
—— *collaris*, Temm. Man. d'Orn., 1st edit. p. 349.
Morinella collaris, Meyer, Vög. Liv- und Esthl., p. 210.
Charadrius cinclus, Pall. Zoog. Ross.-Asiat., tom. ii. p. 148.
Cinclus interpres, G. R. Gray, Gen. of Birds, vol. iii. p. 549, *Cinclus*, sp. 1.
—— *morinellus*, G. R. Gray, List of Gen. of Birds, 1841, p. 87.
Strepsilas borealis, Brehm, Vög. Deutschl., p. 559.
—— *littoralis*, Brehm, ib., p. 560.

THE Turnstone is found not only in the British Islands but in almost every part of the globe,—in the Old World from Norway to the Cape of Good Hope, from China to Capes Leuwin and Howe in Australia, and even still further south (for I found it in all the parts of Tasmania I visited); in the New World from Hudson's Bay to Florida and Mexico. Mr. Darwin obtained specimens in the Galapagos archipelago, on the coast of Peru, and, according to Yarrell, in the Straits of Magellan; it is also found in the Moluccas and, doubtless, in all the other islands of the New Guinea group in the Pacific, as it certainly is in Madeira and Teneriffe in the Atlantic. Although so great a wanderer, it is nowhere very abundant; and wherever it is met with, it is singly, in pairs, or in small companies of not more than six, eight, or a dozen. Its chief breeding-quarters are doubtless the high northern regions; but some deposit their eggs, as we know, on the western coast of Norway.

The situations to which the Turnstone is more especially partial are low islands, the strands of the sea-shore, and the borders of inland waters contiguous to the ocean. In its disposition it is more tame than wary; and its actions and economy are as curious as its plumage is chaste and beautiful. Those who may wish to see a living example have only to visit the Menagerie of the Zoological Society in the Regent's Park, where they will find a domesticated individual living in perfect harmony with other birds, and in as beautiful a condition as if in a state of nature.

The usual food of the Turnstone consists of marine insects and their larvæ, worms, and crustaceans, for procuring which its peculiarly constructed bill is admirably adapted. On the beach the progress of a small troop of Turnstones may be readily traced by the stones, shells, and clods of earth they have turned over in their course. At the base of the upper mandible is a small fleshy sheath or fold of skin, the purpose of which is unknown. It has often recalled to my recollection the *Chionis*, to which bird the Turnstone seems to me to offer a slight alliance. As this fold shrivels up, becomes hard, and is not apparent after death, it must be looked for in the living bird; it is, I trust, rendered sufficiently clear in the accompanying illustration. I am uncertain whether the chestnut-red plumage in which I have figured this interesting bird, is or is not a livery which once assumed is never again thrown off; in winter we mostly meet with the bird in the dark costume represented in the reduced figure on the opposite Plate; these, however, may be young birds of the year; it was in this state that the individuals I observed in Tasmania were mostly seen.

Mr. Stevenson, in his notes on the Birds of Norfolk, states that the Turnstone visits that county regularly, though not in large numbers, arriving in August, remaining during the winter, and leaving again in spring for the breeding-grounds. He has met with small flocks in the *scawps* at Hunstanton as late as the 13th or 14th of June, and has no doubt that some few remain all the year round, but as yet has no evidence of their breeding in that neighbourhood. Mr. Rodd says it is common on the flat beaches and the Marazion sands in Cornwall during the spring and autumn migrations; and Mr. J. Edmund Harting tells me that, after spending a week in looking for the Turnstone along the Northumberland coast and on the Farne Islands, he, on the 15th of May, 1863, fell in with a small flock of eight near Beadnel, and succeeded in killing two. This gentleman is of opinion that the bird still breeds on the Farne Islands; but this requires confirmation, although he states that, during a visit to North Sunderland in 1863, he purchased from a fisherman some eggs taken on the islands the previous year, among which he discovered one he believed to be a Turnstone's.

Mr. Hewitson's account of the nesting of this bird, as seen by him in Norway, is so interesting that I cannot refrain from transcribing it:—

“I have never heard of an instance of the Turnstone breeding upon the British islands, although led to expect it from having at various times seen several of the birds upon the Northumberland coast and also