

projecting tuft of grass or rush, where it scrapes rather a deep hole in the ground, and lines it with dried grass, leaves, and other materials. The eggs are four in number, of a cream-yellow colour, with numerous spots of dark brown upon the surface, and others of a lighter hue appearing as if beneath the surface of the shell." "They are pyriform, and placed with the narrow ends together, so as to occupy less space;" and "they are so disproportionately large," says Macgillivray, "that one is apt to marvel how so small a bird could have laid them, their average length being an inch and four-twelfths, and their greatest breadth an inch." "If disturbed during the period of incubation," continues Mr. Selby, "the female quits the nest as quietly as possible, and usually flies to a distance, making no outcry. As soon, however, as the young are hatched, her manners completely alter; she becomes greatly agitated on the apprehension of danger, and every stratagem is resorted to, such as feigning lameness and inability of flight, to divert the attention of the intruder from the unfledged brood. As soon as hatched, the young quit the nest, and in the course of three weeks are nearly able to fly. If discovered and an attempt be made to catch them before they are fully fledged, they boldly take to the water and dive to a considerable distance."

"Of all our summer birds of passage," says Mr. Thompson, "the Sandpiper, so attractive from its beautifully bronzed plumage, lively motions, loud piping note, and graceful curving flight, is the most widely dispersed, and the least choice as to locality, a mere sufficiency of water in any form being apparently the only essential to its presence. In the petty tarns situated amid the sublime scenery of our lofty mountains, as at Lough Salt in Donegal, on the low and extensive shores of our three greatest lakes—Lough Neagh, Erne, and Corrib, around the richly wooded and rocky shores of Killarney, as well as about lakes of every intermediate size and physical character, I have remarked this species. It is also found at the lofty source of our springs and brooks, in the beds of rocky torrents and gently flowing streams, and along the banks of the largest rivers, until, in their gathered might, they move majestically to mingle with the ocean. Here, again, on shores of every description—the soft oozy beach, the sand, the gravel, about the Norway-like *fjord* of the Killeries in Connemara, and the iron-bound coast of Antrim, including the Giant's Causeway itself—its piping note proclaims its presence."

So far as I am aware, the Summer Snipe does not breed on the banks of the Thames or any of its tributaries; but we know that it constructs its slight nest and rears its young in all suitable situations in Derbyshire, Lancashire, Westmoreland, Cumberland, Scotland, and Ireland.

The young are very peculiar in their appearance, and in their markings very much resemble youthful Avocets and long-legged Plovers. These little creatures, even before the appearance of their tail-feathers, run over the shingle with great agility, and readily screen themselves from observation by creeping under a stone, into a crevice in the earth, or among the herbage on the river-side.

The sexes are alike in plumage, and may be thus described:—

The head, all the upper surface, wing-coverts, and tertiaries greenish olive with a bronzy lustre; the feathers of the head and back with a streak of dark brown down the centre, and the wing-coverts crossed by numerous irregular bars of the same hue; primaries brown, glossed with bronze, with a narrow edging of white at the tip, and a broader mark of white along the basal portion of the inner web; secondaries white at the base, bronzy olive for the remainder of their length, with a narrow edging of white at the tip; above the eye a stripe of white; sides of the neck and breast pale olive; throat, centre of the neck, and all the under surface white; tail bronzy olive, the central feathers with a crescent of black at the tip, the next two or three on each side lighter, spotted with dark brown on each web, crossed with black near the end, and tipped with white; the outer feathers on each side the same, except that the external web is white instead of bronzy olive; the remainder of the bill pale flesh-colour, tip of the upper and the greater part of the under mandible dark brown; irides blackish brown; legs and feet pale greenish white.

The young in the first autumn are similar in colour, but have the whole of the upper surface of the body, under mandible, wings, and tail conspicuously barred with brown.

In the downy state, or when about two days old, a conspicuous line of black runs from the base of the bill through the eye to the occiput, and a similar dark line runs down the centre of the back; the upper surface is mottled with brown and grey; the under surface pure white; the legs fleshy white.

The Plate represents a male, a female, a nest of young ones, and an egg, all of the size of nature.