

GLOTTIS CANESCENS.

Greenshank.

Scolopax canescens, Gmel. edit. Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 668.

Totanus griseus, Bechst. Naturg. Deutschl., vol. iv. p. 231.

—— *fistulans*, Bechst. ibid., p. 241.

—— *glottis*, Bechst. ibid., p. 249.

Limosa glottis, Pall. Zoog. Rosso-Asiat., tom. ii. p. 179.

—— *totanus*, Pall. ibid., p. 183.

Glottis chloropus, Nilss. Orn. Suec., tom. ii. p. 57.

—— *canescens*, Strickl.

Limicula glottis, Leach, Syst. Cat. of Indig. Mamm. and Birds in Coll. Brit. Mus., p. 32.

Glottis grisea, Brehm, Vög. Deutschl., p. 631.

—— *fistulans*, Brehm, ibid., p. 631, tab. 33. fig. 2.

—— *natans*, Koch, Baier. Zool., tom. i. p. 305.

Totanus chloropus, Meyer, Vog. Liv- und Esthl., p. 199.

THE Greenshank is one of the most sprightly and elegant of our Sandpipers. With us it is only a summer visitant; for, if it ever be killed here in winter, the circumstance must be regarded as exceptional. Twice a year, in spring and autumn, it passes over our islands, from north to south and *vice versâ*, with the utmost regularity. From the middle of April to the middle of May it may be found in most of our low marshy districts—such as the Isle of Thanet, the mouths of the Thames and Medway, and in all similar situations in Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, and Lincolnshire. The birds are now proceeding northward to the highlands of Argyll, Ross-shire, Sutherland, and Caithness, in each of which counties it resorts to the wildest districts, to breed and rear its young. In every situation, whether it be on the sea-shore, in the marsh, or on the mountain-side, the bearing of the bird is bold and animated; but on the slightest alarm it becomes shy and distrustful, and its usual whistling note shrill and weird-like. These traits in the character of the Greenshank render it a great favourite with ornithologists. I will now mention some few of the localities where it breeds; but I do so with reluctance, being indisposed to be the means of attracting to them the attention of those merciless persons whose aim and desire seems to be the destruction, rather than the preservation, of our rarer native birds. The wild flats on the borders of Loch Assynt and the neighbouring hills are annually resorted to by a few pairs of this lonely bird—as are also the bogs at the back of Arkle and Foineven, in the Reay forest, and the moorlands near Thurso, in Caithness. By those who are unacquainted with the habits of the larger *Scolopacidae* the nest would rarely be discovered, since they would naturally look for it round the edges of the pools and lochs where they have seen the bird running and feeding; whereas its four beautiful eggs are deposited far up on the sunny mountain-side, or in the centre of the wide flat, where they are most difficult to find unless the bird be very closely watched. The season of incubation having terminated, and the young acquired sufficient strength to enable them to quit their heathery home, another migration takes place; and in August and September the Greenshank may again be seen in the more southern parts of our islands above mentioned. Thence they gradually pass over to the Continent and proceed to other countries to the southward, as far, it would seem, as land trends in that direction; for I found birds, both in the winter and the young dress, in many parts of Australia; I believe it also occurs in the intervening country of Java, and is distributed over the whole of India, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. Had it also been found in America, it would have been a cosmopolite. Besides the Scottish hills, those of Lapland, Finmark, and Siberia afford this wanderer equally suitable summer residences; in a word, the Greenshank inhabits the warmer latitudes of the Old World during the winter solstice, and its northern regions at the opposite season.

“Though of regular annual appearance in the north of Ireland,” says Thompson, “it comes in extremely limited numbers, and is one of the earliest species in arrival after the breeding-season—a fact to which our attention is directed by its peculiar cry. It appears in Belfast Bay about the middle of July, and may be readily known on the shore from the most nearly allied species, the Redshank, by its superior size; its note, too, though generically similar, at once distinguishes it from that bird. It sounds like the word *twee* prolonged, and uttered moderately slow three times. On the oozy banks and gravelly shore of Belfast Bay it may be observed, feeding busily, wading deep in search of its prey, and evincing a great partiality for the fresh-water rivulets that course through the mud-banks at low water. I am not aware of its breeding in Ireland.”

“In the Outer Hebrides,” says Macgillivray, “it is seen early in summer, and generally departs in October, although I have seen individuals there in November. Previous to the commencement of the breeding-