

are over, they all alight one by one on the ground. Some stand quite still, watching with inquiring gaze; while others stretch themselves out, first expanding one wing, then the other, and, sitting down, extend both legs. In this position they remain some seconds, as if dead, when suddenly springing up they make another circuit overhead, and the whole flock passes quietly away. The Pratincole makes no nest, but deposits its three eggs in a slight depression of the bare sand. They are usually placed with their axes parallel. We several times visited places where numbers of these birds were breeding, yet we never succeeded in finding a young one, though many of the eggs were on the point of being hatched. This fact favours the idea that on leaving the egg the young are capable of running like those of other *Grallæ*. The Pratincoles often attracted my attention by their incessant cries and furious attacks, as if resenting my intrusion on their domain."

Col. Drummond-Hay informs me that he frequently observed the Pratincole skimming and hovering over the marshy plains about thirteen miles from Tangier, where it breeds; but never saw the bird in any other part of Eastern Morocco. To this gentleman I am also indebted for the following note, which he obligingly procured for me from M. François Favier, a French naturalist, resident in Tangier:—

"Here the Pratincole usually deposits its eggs during the month of May, in the small depressions made by the feet of animals, in meadows which are overflowed in winter. A second laying seems to take place in July, as recently hatched young birds are found in June and August."

The egg figured by Mr. Hewitson is of an olivaceous stone-colour, spotted with dark brown; but he says that the ground-colour is frequently much darker than in the one represented in his work.

Lieut. Spalding says:—"Whilst boar-shooting on the Plain of Sharon, I shot some Pratincoles. There were a great many of them hawking for insects over the fields, flying at a height of about twenty feet, and continually uttering a sound between a low scream and a whistle. The stomach of one I examined was very full of coleopterous and other insects. I rather think they catch as many on the ground as on the wing; for they frequently settle and run with all the ease of a Plover. They roost on the ground, and fly late at night, their large eyes being well adapted for seeing in the dusk."

The Rev. H. B. Tristram states that "the Pratincole (*Glareola pratincola*) disappears from Palestine in winter, but returns in great numbers to all the marshy plains in spring, when we found them on their breeding-grounds, where they can be shot in any numbers, as they keep hovering over the intruders, undismayed by repeated discharges of the gun. As in Africa, they lay their eggs in a footprint in the barest spots, without the slightest nest; they are never found where there is a vestige of vegetation, and, from their great similarity to the pebbles and bits of clay around, are very difficult to discover, while the bird employs all the artifices of a Lapwing to decoy the spoiler from them."

In the note from Lord Lilford accompanying the chicks above mentioned, he says:—"The two young Pratincoles were taken in the great marshes on the Guadalquivir, in June 1869, and had only left the eggs a few hours. They were brought to me alive; and I can positively state that they run immediately after being hatched. Pratincoles are very abundant in spring and summer in the locality above mentioned. The flight and cry of these birds, their habit of hawking for insects on the wing, and the colour of their eyes forcibly reminded me of the Terns."

About the beginning of August the young birds fly about with the adults, which, being very much attached to their progeny, accompany them until the commencement of September, when they all move southward for the winter. Their flight is described as of extraordinary rapidity; and their evolutions are said to be exceedingly graceful, quick, and beautiful. "When a flight passes through the air within sight, they proceed very swiftly, and on lowering to alight they shoot like arrows by one another; finally they once more open their wings to their full length, raise them highly, and then settle, rather closely spread, over the ground."

The sexes do not appear to differ in their colouring, and but little in size.

The Plate represents the two sexes and the young, of the size of life.

I have figured four young birds, under the impression that, as with the Plovers, this was the normal number; but Lord Lilford is of opinion that three would have been more correct.