

week I submitted it to the inspection of Mr. Tegetmeier, an authority respecting Pigeons, who decided that it was undoubtedly a Stock-Dove, and added that the fact of this species resorting to cliffs to breed, not accidentally, but in small numbers, was interesting and hitherto unknown."

"Although far less numerous, and more locally distributed than the Ring-Dove," says Mr. Stevenson in his 'Birds of Norfolk,' "the Stock-Dove is plentiful at certain times of the year and in certain parts of the country, particularly the north-eastern and south-western districts. In the latter, with the exception of about four months (from the middle of September to the middle of January, or even later if the winter be much prolonged), it is found, if not in great abundance, yet in sufficient numbers to be one of the most characteristic birds of that part of that open country. During the latter part of the autumn and beginning of winter, though not, perhaps, absolutely absent, yet it only occasionally appears, and then generally flocked with Ring-Doves. That accurate naturalist, the late Mr. Salmon, states that the Stock-Dove, which in all 'works upon natural history is stated to be only an inhabitant of woods, abounds in this neighbourhood during the spring and summer months, upon our rabbit-warrens and heaths, to which it annually resorts for the purpose of nidification, and it is in general the first that arrives in the district for that purpose. The situation which it selects for its nest differs materially from that chosen by its congeners, the Ring- and Turtle Doves, the nests of which are always placed upon trees or bushes; this species, on the contrary, occupies the deserted rabbit-burrows upon warrens, and places its pair of eggs about a yard from the entrance, generally upon the bare sand, sometimes using a small quantity of dried roots, &c., barely sufficient to keep the eggs from the ground. Besides such situations, on the heaths it nestles under the thick furze bushes (*Ulex europæa*), which are impervious to rain, in consequence of the sheep and rabbits eating off the young and tender shoots as they grow, always preferring those bushes that have a small opening made by the rabbits near the ground. A few pairs occasionally breed in the holes of decayed trees. It generally commences breeding by the end of March or the beginning of April, the young ones, which are very much esteemed, being ready for the table by the commencement of June.' Mr. Alfred Newton tells me that the young Stock-Doves, being a perquisite of the warreners, are a source of not inconsiderable profit, as they sell them for from eighteenpence to two shillings a couple, and that almost every warrener keeps a "dow-dawg," i. e. a dog regularly trained to discover the burrows in which the doves breed. Mr. Scales, of Beechamwells, adds that "when the warreners find them in a burrow, they fix sticks at the mouth of the hole in such a manner as to prevent the escape of the young, but to allow the old birds to feed them." Mr. Newton, however, informs me that this precaution is thought unnecessary; for the more experienced warreners, from long practice, know to a day (after once seeing the nestlings) when they will be fit to take. Along the extensive range of sandhills in the neighbourhood of Hunstanton also, the Stock-Doves may be found breeding in considerable numbers, and likewise on Holt Heath and other similar localities; indeed I have no doubt that with careful observation a few pairs might be found in summer in many rough furze-covered spots where rabbits are preserved; but this peculiarity in the habits of the Stock-Dove is by no means generally known. In 1863, a friend of mine, whilst ferreting on Mr. George's farm, at Eaton, near Norwich, was not a little surprised at seeing a pigeon flutter out of a rabbit's hole (half hidden by thick gorse, in the steep side of a sandpit) into which he had just previously turned his ferret: the bird was caught by a terrier before it could take flight, and proved to be an old Stock-Dove; but on a subsequent examination of the burrow no eggs or young were found. I may add that in that neighbourhood the bird is by no means common. This species, however, in certain districts, also breeds in our woods and plantations with the common Ring-Dove, but in such situations it nests either in the holes of old trees, using only a few sticks by way of lining, in the stocks of old oak-pollards (from which circumstance, according to Yarrell, it has acquired the name of Stock-Dove), or, as my friend Mr. Edwards informs me, in any faggot-stacks left in the plantations for the summer, the nest being generally placed at the bottom should sufficient space remain for the purpose. Mr. Newton has also found a pair of eggs of this bird at Elveden, near Thetford, "laid on a very thick bushy bough of a Scotch fir tree, about twelve feet from the ground, without any nest." Mr. Samuel Bligh, who has studied the habits of this species during the breeding-season at Framingham Earl, says that their actions are occasionally anything but *dove-like*, as they fight most desperately till one or both fall to the ground. He has shot them in the very act."

The sexes are very similar in outward appearance; but the female is rather smaller than the male, and is a trifle less brilliant in colour, particularly in the glossy hues of the green and purple metallic tints which adorn the sides of the neck.

The eggs are white, oblong in form, and very similar to those of the common Ring-Dove. The Plate represents a male and the head of a female, of the size of life.