In the spring of 1863, the same pair made a hole and deposited four eggs in the dead branch of another of the Formosa poplars, at a height of fifty-five fret. These delicate flesh-coloured eggs were very beautiful, and measured three-quarters of an inch in length by half an inch in breadth.

Some persons have stated that the eggs of this bird resemble those of the Wryneck; but a comparison of blown specimens will at once show that they are very different—those of the Wryneck being of a dull opaque chalky white, while those of the Woodpecker are so transparent, that when placed on pink wool the colour is plainly visible through them; the surface, too, is glossy, and approximates in appearance to those of the Kingfisher, Roller, and Bee-eater.

The Rev. Mr. Bree states that "its loud, rapid, vibratory noise, most extraordinarily loud to be produced by so small an animal, can hardly fail to arrest the attention of the most unobserving ear. Though I have watched the bird during the operation within the distance of a few yards, I am quite at a loss to account for the manner in which the noise is produced. It resembles that made by the boring of a large auger through the hardest wood; and hence the country people sometimes call this bird the 'pump-borer.'" Mr. Dovaston informs us that in the woods near Shrewsbury it never failed in April to astonish him "with his prodigiously long churr on the ranpikes of the trees, which, the atmosphere being favourable, may be heard more than a mile. It much resembles the snorting of a frightened horse, but louder and longer; in performing this sound the bird vibrates its beak against the tree; the motion is so quick as to be invisible, and the head appears in two places at once. It is surprising, and to me wondrously pleasing, to observe the many varieties of tone and pitch in their loud churry, as they change their place on boughs of different vibration, as though they struck on the different bars of a gigantic staccato. When boring they make no noise whatever, but quietly and silently pick out the pieces of decaying wood, which, lying white and scattered beneath on the ground and plants, leads the eye up to their operations above. They have several favourite spots, to which they very frequently return. Their voice is a very feeble squeak, repeated rapidly six or eight times, *ee, ee, ee, ee, ee*. They bore numerous and very deep holes in decayed parts, where they retire to sleep early in the evening, and though frequently aroused will freely return. Whatever be the purpose of this enormous noise, they certainly do very nimbly watch and eagerly pick up the insects they have disturbed by it. They fly in jerks, and always alight on the side of a tree."

"The loud noise above described," says Macgillivray, "is supposed by some to be an amatory performance, as it is heard only or chiefly in spring, while others conjecture it to be produced by a rapid tapping of the bill, for the purpose of disturbing insects that are lodged in the bark. This latter opinion is more probable; for in spring it besides emits its ordinary notes so much more frequently and loudly than usual, that they may well pass for a love song."

This species is very rare in Holland, but is very generally dispersed over nearly every other part of Europe, and in the forests of the three provinces of Algeria.

The sexes are distinguished by the colouring of the crown, which is scarlet in the male and white in the female, a distinction which also obtains in the young birds before they leave the tree in which they have commenced their existence; in all other respects the plumage of the two sexes is alike.

I have not failed to remark that our birds are very diminutive when compared with examples killed in Norway and Russia. I am certainly within the mark when I say that the Continental specimens are a fifth larger than those killed in this country. Our birds are also less pure in colour, both on the upper and under surface.

The male has the forehead pale brown, bounded above by a narrow line of dull white; crown scarlet interspersed with lighter marks when the bases of the feathers are exposed; occiput and nape black; each side of the nape white; under each ear-covert a patch of black; upper surface, wings, and four central tail-feathers black; wing-coverts tipped with white; wing-feathers with a series of angular spots of white on their outer webs and rounded spots of white on their inner webs; centre of the back white, irregularly barred across with black; the whole of these white markings forming, when the wings are closed, a series of bands across the body and wings; lateral tail-feathers black at the base largely tipped with white, which on the two outer ones is crossed by a couple of narrow interrupted bars of black; cheeks, throat, and under surface dirty white, with a few oblong lines of black on the sides of the chest, and a few blackish spots on the under tail-coverts; bill bluish lead-colour; legs, feet, and nails dark pea-green, the nails the darkest; irides brownish red; eyelash leaden grey.

In the young birds the general hue is the same; but there is a wash of yellow over the under surface, and a tinge of the same colour over all those parts which are white in the adult.

The Plate represents the two sexes and some young birds, all of the natural size.