river, I saw numbers of Crossbills and Siskins in the beautiful woods of Dulsie. The nests of these two birds are scarcely ever found, though they certainly breed plentifully in this country. The Siskin conceals its small nest, with great care, at some distance from the ground, generally near the trunk of a spruce fir; while the Crossbill places its nest, which it assimilates as much as possible to the colour and texture of the moss, on some good-sized horizontal branch of a fir tree, so that it is nearly invisible from below."

A nest found at Benlochen, in Scotland, on the 10th of April 1858, was composed exteriorly of a kind of scaffolding, made with rather coarse twigs of the fir. These were strongly matted together with wool, dry moss, and exceedingly fine roots; the same substances also composed the interior. The walls were very thick, whilst the cup of the nest was somewhat shallow.

I will now give the gist of what has been written by Mr. Wheelwright respecting the breeding of the Crossbill in Sweden, as there is an evident love of truth in all his observations, and because it is the best account that has yet been published.

"The pairing-season begins about the middle of January, when both sexes utter a very pretty song: the note of the female is much fainter than that of her mate. Were it not for the difference of the landscape, we might almost at this season imagine ourselves in the tropical regions of the south when we watch a little flock of these birds feeding, flitting from cone to cone, or climbing over them with their backs downward, like the Parrots, their bright red or orange plumage reflected in the rays of the afternoon sun, which even at this inclement season gild the tops of the firs for an hour or two before sinking below the horizon. They commence nesting often in the end of January, always by the middle of February; we have generally taken the first eggs in March, and in the end of April we have shot young fliers. They then appeared to leave us for the summer, and we rarely saw them again till autumn. That their periods of breeding are regulated by the weather, I do not believe; for a bird that can sit when the snow lies deep on the forest, and the fir trees are covered (which is the usual case), would care little whether the cold was a few degrees more intense than usual. That their breeding-seasons are as regular as those of any other species, I fully believe; nor do I think that they or any other bird, as a general rule, breed twice in the year in Sweden. I know no bird sit so close as the Crossbill. It will never leave the nest till you put your hand on it. I have often knocked the old bird off the eggs with a small fir branch, when she would directly try to return again. As regards the colouring of the Crossbills," says Mr. Wheelwright, in his 'Spring and Summer in Lapland,' "I can truly affirm that they assume four distinct dresses at different periods. The first, which lasts from the time they leave the nest until the first moult in September, is greenish brown, with dark longitudinal streaks down each feather, and is very similar in both sexes: at this time the bills of the young birds are straight, but the mandibles soon begin to cross each other after they have left the nest; and in young birds of the year, killed in November, the bill was nearly as much curved as in the adults: sometimes the point of the under mandible crosses to the right, sometimes to the left. On the completion of the first autumnal moult, the sexes are easily distinguished. The striped feathers of immaturity are very apparent in both all through the winter and following spring; but all the under parts are tinged in the young males with yellowish orange, and in the females with bright yellow; in the former the head and rump are orange, in the latter those parts are only tinged with yellow. I think it very probable that a change of colour takes place in May; for this orange-colour appears to me gradually to redden without moulting, and so much do the shades vary that scarcely two young males are exactly alike. It is impossible to say how long this youthful state of plumage lasts, but, I am inclined to think, certainly until the second autumnal moult, and even longer; for early in November I have killed young males of a beautiful orange-red colour, which, from their size and general appearance and the total absence of the dark striped feathers of youth, could not have been birds of the year. I am almost confident that this orange-red colour is a gradual transition to the red dress of the fully adult male. Of one thing, however, I am perfectly convinced, that none of the young males obtain the full deep red dress at the first autumnal moult. Respecting the bright yellow-green dress which the old males occasionally assume, it is hard to say at what age it is put on, but, we may reasonably infer, at a very advanced period of life in a state of nature; it is said that as soon as a male Crossbill or Grosbeak is confined in a cage, it changes from red to bright yellow-green at once, and wears this colour till it dies."

The nestling birds are very like the young of the Greenfinch (Chlorospiza Chloris), as may be seen on reference to the accompanying Plate, which I have been enabled to render very complete by including figures of the fine nest and examples of the young birds sent to me by Mr. Wheelwright. The eggs are as much like those of the Greenfinch as are the young birds,—so much so, that Mr. Hewitson remarks, "it is not easy to point out anything to distinguish them, except that they are more pointed at the smaller end than the typical eggs of that species."

As is the case with the Parrot Crossbill, the most northerly range of this bird in Europe is not well known; but Mr. Alfred Newton informs me that, in 1855, he saw a small flock at Muoniovara, and that he has since received a nest and eggs from the same district.

The Plate represents a male, a female, four young birds, and a nest, all of the natural size.