Lord Lilford notes that it abounds, with other Larks, near Aranjuez, in Spain, during the month of May, that in Portugal it is said to be common throughout the country, and that in Corfu and Epirus it is very numerous at all seasons.

The Rev. H. B. Tristram records that it is "common in the more barren districts of Palestine, is a summer migrant, revisiting the central country late in the spring, and not occurring in the plains or desert in the winter."

"This," says Mr. Wright, "is one of the most characteristic birds of Malta, where, in spring, it may be seen hovering over the rocky wastes covered with the aromatic-smelling Thymus capitatus. In the breeding-season (from April to June) it is abundantly spread in pairs all over the island; and the song of the male is then constantly heard encouraging its mate in the labours of incubation. Its mode of ascending in the air is different from that of the Sky-Lark, consisting of a succession of jerks, which may be peculiar to the species. It delights in the wastes and desert tracts of the island. At the commencement of autumn it assembles in flocks, which appear to be joined by numerous fresh comers from the north; but all speed away before the winter sets in."

The best account of the Short-toed Lark is contained in Mr. Jerdon's excellent work 'The Birds of India.'

It is as follows:—

"This species is widely distributed throughout Asia, Europe, and Africa, and has even been once killed in Britain. It is found throughout India, but is more rare to the extreme south, and has not been observed in Ceylon, but is numerous in the Deccan, and thence northwards to the foot of the Himalayas, but not in the countries to the eastward.

"The Short-toed Lark appears in India in October and November in flocks, frequenting the bare grassy downs, damp spots near tanks, grain-fields, and ploughed land, and it almost always retires to corn-fields or grass for shelter during the heat of the day, whence it would seem not to issue again till next morning, for it is seldom seen flying about or feeding in the afternoon or evening. It feeds almost entirely upon seeds, both runs and hops on the ground, and has a call-note like that of the true Larks. Towards the end of March in the south (April in the north) of India different flocks often unite into vast troops containing many thousand birds and quite darkening the air, so close do they keep together even when flying. Great numbers are netted in some parts of the country, taken by birdlime, or shot; for when feeding they also keep close to each other. On one occasion, on the cavalry parade-ground at Kamptee, I bagged twelve dozen birds, after discharging both barrels, and many wounded birds escaped. They get quite fat about this time, are really very excellent eating, and are called "Ortolan" by Europeans in India. They leave the north of India about the end of April, or beginning of May; and they breed in the steppes of Central Asia, Eastern Russia, and Northern Africa—placing their nest on the ground, at the edge of a scrub or bush, and laying four or six eggs, usually marked with grey and rufous spots, but sometimes, it is said, unspotted yellowish-brown."

Captain Irby states that this Lark is exceedingly numerous in Oudh and Kumaon, where it is caught in nets by the natives, and sold to Europeans as "Ortolan;" Captain Beavan that it is common at Maunbhoom; and Mr. Allan Hume that in the lower and central portions of the Duab of the Ganges and Jumna the Short-toed Lark is found in countless flocks.

The sexes are not distinguishable by the colouring of their plumage; but, on a close comparison, the tints of the female are found to be somewhat duller than those of the male.

The top of the head and all the upper surface are of a yellowish or sandy brown, with the centre of each feather darker; quills and tail dusky brown, the two outer feathers of the latter externally edged with yellowish white; a whitish yellow streak over each eye; throat and abdomen white; ear-coverts dark brown; on each side of the upper part of the chest a blackish patch, which Mr. Blyth states is always present but in newly moulted plumage is but little seen; chest and flanks tinged with yellowish brown; bill and feet light brown.

The young, during the first autumn, have the outer edge of each feather margined with buff, similar to one of the birds on the accompanying Plate.

The figures represent an adult and a young bird, of the natural size. The plant is the Dianthus deltoides, Linn.