GALERITA CRISTATA.

Crested Lark.

Alauda cristata, Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 288.
——— *galerita*, Pall. Zoog. Ross.-Asiat., tom. i. p. 524.
——— *undata*, Gmel. edit. Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 797.
Galerida cristata, Boie, Isis, 1828, p. 321.
——— *viarum*, Brehm, Vög. Deutschl., p. 315.
——— *undata*, Boie, Isis, 1828, p. 321.
Lullula cristata, Kaup, Natürl. Syst., p. 92.
Heterops cristatus, Hodgs. in Gray's Zool. Misc., 1844, p. 84.
Galerita cristata, Cab. Mus. Hein., Theil i. p. 125.

How remarkably defined is the limit of the range of some species of birds! a chain of mountains of no great breadth, a narrow strait, or a river of moderate width frequently forming a boundary over which they never or very seldom pass. In Australia, in the physical condition of which the hand of man has effected but little alteration, many instances of this kind occur; and in Europe, where science and agriculture have played so important a part in altering the face of the country, the restrictions are almost as permanent as ever. The Nightingale is not, nor ever has been, found in the British Islands to the south-west of Dorset, or to the north of Yorkshire, neither does the Grouse proceed southward of the Bristol Channel. I cite these two instances out of many, before proceeding to the history of a bird which forms a still more striking example of this sharply defined limit to its range. Every visitor from this country to the neighbouring kingdom of France, who takes an interest in birds, must have observed, when strolling towards the interior of the country from Calais or Boulogne, that within the distance of a mile he has risen from the dusty road one, two, or more pairs of the Crested Lark; yet on our side of the channel it very rarely occurs; so seldom, indeed, is it to be seen here, that twenty years may elapse before the most diligent observer can say he has met with it. A few solitary individuals have, however, favoured us with their presence; and for this reason we give the species a place in the 'Birds of Great Britain.'

Mr. Rodd, in his 'Guide to the Ornithology of Cornwall,' states that "two examples were obtained in September 1846, from the road-side between Penzance and Marazion. Attention was drawn to the birds by the melodious character of their chirp, resembling more the flute-like tones of the Woodlark than the buoyant song of our common Skylark." Another specimen was observed, and subsequently secured by Mr. J. N. R. Millett, of Penzance, in the latter part of October 1850. Besides these, Mr. G. D. Rowley states that an example was "brought in by a bird-catcher, from near Shoreham, in Sussex, alive on the 20th October 1863," and he had reason to believe that more were passing over during the autumn of that year.

On the continent the Crested Lark frequents France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and Spain, while Turkey, Greece, Asia Minor, Sicily, Crete, and Egypt claim it as one of the commonest birds of their avifaunæ; and it appears to be numerous in North Africa, Palestine, Persia, Scinde, Affghanistan, and India. Mr. Taylor states that it is excessively abundant in Egypt—so much so, that he regarded it and the *Motacilla alba* as the most numerous of all the small birds in that country. In the Eastern Atlas Mr. Salvin found it "abundant in all the plains, both in Tunis and the Salt-lake country. In the latter districts it was breeding in the month of May, but some eggs were obtained in April. The plains appear to be most frequented, but it was by no means an unusual occurrence to find it in the mountains and rocky passes."

Mr. Jerdon informs us that "it is found throughout the whole of India, but it is most abundant in the north and north-western provinces; it is rare in the Carnatic, not in Malabar, more common in the Deccan, and thence spreading from Behar, in the east, to Scinde and the Punjab, where it is very numerous. It is not known in Bengal nor in the Himalayas, nor in the countries to the eastward. It prefers dry and open sandy plains to ploughed land, to grass, wet meadows, or cultivation. In winter it may be seen, in small parties or sometimes in considerable flocks, occasionally on roads and barren places. The nest is described as formed of a little grass in a hole in the ground, and the eggs are four in number, of a yellowish white, uniformly freckled with greyish yellow and a neutral tint. It is frequently caged in all parts of the country, and the bird is kept in darkness by several layers of cloth wrapped round the cage, the custom being to wrap an additional cover round the cage every year. In this state it sings very sweetly, and learns to imitate most exactly the notes of various other birds and of animals, such as the yelping of a dog, the mewing of a cat, the call of a hen to her chickens, &c."

Although the bird is stated to be generally dispersed over the south of Europe, it appears not to occur in all parts of it; for it is not included in Count Salvadori's 'Catalogue of the Birds of Sardinia,' and its