

“The Aquatic Warbler has a somewhat limited range. It is only known with certainty to breed in Germany and Holland. According to Temminck it is merely an accidental visitor to the latter country; but Mühle gives this as one of its breeding-places. It is plentiful in Italy and the south of France during the passage. It is found in Switzerland and Sardinia, on the banks of the Var and Rhone, and in the marshes surrounding Arles. It is also found at Dieppe and in the marshes about Lille. It occurs in Algeria, as stated by Captain Loche; and Mr. Salvin, in his ‘Five Months’ Bird-nesting in the Eastern Atlas’ (Ibis, 1859), says, ‘At the head of the little marsh of Ain Djendeli I more than once observed a pair of this Warbler. We afterwards found it more abundant at Zana, where it was breeding. Its habits much resemble those of the Common Reed Warbler (*C. arundinacea*); its eggs also are similar.’

“‘It is really plentiful nowhere,’ says Count Mühle, ‘and it dwells preferably in large wild swamps. In summer it need only be sought for where the water is cooped up almost knee-deep with ditches and dry necks of land running into it, and covered with bushes, high grass, rushes, and reeds. In autumn it may be found in more cultivated ground. It is a very restless and lively bird, and also crafty and cunning. It creeps with great agility through the twigs and stalks of the thick swampy plants, in which it excels all other Reed Warblers. It may be seen gliding along near the ground like a mouse; it never hops on the ground, but goes along step by step. On the stalks and perpendicular stems of plants it runs up and down with such agility that it seems to slide along without using its feet at all. Its call is like the rest of the Reed Warblers; its love-song, though loud, is also pleasant, and comes almost always from the depth of the reed-beds and seldom from the summit of the stalks; it is, however, proportionably heard among trees. It builds its nest in the swamp: the exterior is formed of coarse grass-tops intertwined with delicate straws, and is lined with horse-hair. It is placed between the slender twigs of small bushes, and always in isolated marshy places intersected with ditches. It lays in the beginning of May four or five, rarely six, eggs of a grey-greenish or grey-yellowish ground, with spots more or less strongly marked, darker than the ground colour.’

“Brehm, in Bäder’s ‘European Eggs,’ says of this species:—‘It breeds in Holland, Greece, Germany, and probably in Switzerland and Italy. At the end of April we hear its nuptial song in the marshes, among the bulrushes, reeds, and bog-plants which grow there. Its nest may be found at the end of May, containing five or six eggs, deep under a clump of sedges, in the grass behind rubbish, or on the bank of a hedge near water, hanging on the stalks of a plant. It is unlike that of the Sedge Warbler in being smaller, but is built of the same materials—namely, small rootlets mixed with strips of reed and straw, under which is also some horse-hair. The eggs are smaller, brighter, smoother, and more shining than those of *S. phragmitis*, and are often marked with hair-streaks. Very often the markings are so faint that the egg appears unicolorous. Once we found a nest containing eggs washed with carmine. The male sits but little, the female most assiduously. Incubation thirteen days.’”

An egg figured by Dr. Bree was sent to him by M. Moquin-Tandon with the following remarks:—“This egg comes from the environs of Angers. I had it from M. de Baracé, a distinguished ornithologist. The nest is in the form of a cone, cleverly constructed. It contains four or five eggs of a dirty greenish grey with olive spots more or less dark, generally forming a wreath at the thicker end. I have seen some specimens of a deeper grey.”

In a note to Mr. Harting, the Rev. H. B. Tristram says:—“The nest of *S. aquatica*, which I have several times taken in Africa, is rather like that of *S. luscinioides*, of one material throughout, not suspended like the Reed Warbler’s, but placed in the fork or leaf-joint of a big reed or cane in the centre of a swamp. The nest is small, lined with horse-hair, and interlaced with the stem.”

In size and in the similarity of the sexes the Aquatic Warbler differs but little from our Common Chat or Sedge Warbler (*Calamodyta phragmitis*); but the conspicuous stripes over the eye and down the crown, and the more striated markings of the body, will at all times serve to distinguish it from that species.

I am indebted to Mr. Sharpe for the loan of a fine specimen, from which one of my figures was taken, both of which are of the natural size.

The plant is the Woody Nightshade (*Solanum dulcamara*).