Its saucy note, which is very frequently uttered, resembles the words *chica-chica-chee-chee-chirr-r-r*; it also gives utterance to a more lengthened strain.

No bird sits more closely on its eggs; for, rather than desert them, the female will allow herself to be taken by the hand, and, if released, will return to the nest and continue the task of incubation; but immediately the young are hatched, she becomes fierce, and manifests unequivocal dislike to intrusion.

A nest taken at Taplow in May, 1859, was carelessly composed of fine wood-shavings interwoven with moss; the interior was warmly lined with wool, hair, and feathers. The eggs, ten in number, before being blown, were of a dull fleshy white, spotted with reddish, and not so transparent as the eggs of small birds generally are; when emptied of their yelk, the ground-colour became of a beautiful opaque white.

The progeny of a nest generally keep together during the first autumn, and frequent the garden or shrubbery in which they were bred, but in winter range widely over the neighbouring woods, coppices, and hedge-rows; early in the spring all that have escaped the natural enemies which interfere with their well-being separate into pairs and follow the example of their parents.

The colouring of the nestling birds is very singular, and quite different from that of the adults. The cheeks, the throat, the forehead, the back of the head, and the nape, which are all white in the old bird, are of a rich and beautiful yellow at this young age. This very striking character is common to the young of this species, the Coal-, and the Great Tit, but not to those of the Marsh-Tit. How long this yellow colouring is retained I do not know; but that it is soon exchanged for the adult livery there can be little doubt, for in mid-winter both adults and young are alike to a feather.

There is no outward difference in the appearance of the sexes; neither are they subject to any seasonal change.

The forehead, a line over the eye to the back of the crown, cheeks, and ear-coverts bluish white; line from the base of the bill through the eye to the occiput deep bluish black; crown of the head blue; stripe down the centre of the throat, and a band which crosses the throat and passes upwards to the back of the head, deep prussian blue; back and upper tail-coverts light yellowish green; wing-coverts deep blue, the greater ones tipped with white; primaries slaty black, narrowly edged with pale greenish blue, fading into white on the apical portion of the longest feathers; secondaries bluish, narrowly margined and largely tipped with white; tail blue; under surface pale sulphur or greenish yellow, with a longitudinal stripe of prussian blue down the centre of the abdomen; margins of the wing-feathers white on the under surface; under side of the tail pearl-grey; bill dusky horn-colour; legs, toes, and claws bluish black.

The young nestlings have the same arrangement of the colours; but the forehead, line over the eye to the occiput, face, ear-coverts, and under surface are pure yellow, and they have also a band of yellow at the base of the neck behind; the gape, which is very wide and fleshy, is of a bright gamboge-yellow; the mandibles are yellow, clouded with reddish brown; inside of the mouth orange; legs and feet blue; round the eye a circle of naked bluish skin.

The Plate represents two adults of the natural size.