show of. Many of the Tits, and some other birds, carry about and hide portions of their food; and the practice would seem to be a habit rather than to answer any special purpose in the bird's economy. Many odd traits occur in the habits of birds, such as the hiding-propensities of the Magpie; and the impaling by the Shrike seems to be of the same nature. Mr. Smither, of Churt, tells me that the bird is sometimes destructive to bees, and that, when it has taken up its position in the neighbourhood of their hives, no greater calamity can befall them. I may here remark that all the insects seen spitted on thorns have not been so by the Red-backed Shrike; for they occur in situations where it is impossible the bird could get; besides which, I have positively seen instances of this kind before the Shrike reaches this country. I have frequently noticed large humble-bees thus impaled, as perfect and as lively as before they had met with this catastrophe; for a catastrophe I believe it to be, as I have always found them on the windy side of a hedge, and often low down near the shoots of grasses, where it was neither likely nor possible for a bird to have been. I have paid considerable attention to this curious subject, and can come to no other conclusion than that they had been blown on to these sharp points by heavy gusts of wind. Besides humble-bees, I have seen the common lady-bird impaled in this way, with its legs uppermost, on the upright spine of a furze, as if it had dropped from a branch of the tree under which the bush was situated. Various papers on the subject, both *pro* and *con*, have appeared from time to time in the 'Zoologist.'

The Red-backed Shrike can scarcely be called a wary bird, since it may be nearly approached while it sits on the topmost spray of the hedgerow, or the outermost sprig of a bush lower down. Flycatcher-like, it affects such prominent situations to secure a wide field for observation: its bold black eye scans the surface of the mead for a considerable distance; and no sooner does it detect a passing insect than it at once sallies forth, either catching it on the wing, or dropping after it among the grass, from which it immediately rises and wings its way back to the twig from which it started. The male frequently sits bolt upright, moving his tail up and down, or swinging it from side to side; and beautiful indeed does its delicate grey head and vinous breast appear in contrast with the green leaves of its favourite hawthorn. The female appears to be more shy and retiring; certainly she is not so frequently seen as her mate. Were anything wanting to give prominence to these birds, their noisy harsh grating cry would be sufficient. Their large nest is generally placed, without any apparent artifice, on the outer branches of a bush, sometimes high up in the hedge, at others near the ground. A nest taken from a whitethorn bush at West Drayton, on the 28th of May, 1858, was outwardly composed of the stems of creeping-plants, next to which was a thick wall of green moss, then a layer of fine roots, and, lastly, a lining of long hairs. It was a large and compact structure, nearly eight inches in diameter. The eggs were of a delicate salmon-colour, with a large zone of brown and grey spots near the larger end, and a few spots of the same hue sprinkled over the remainder of the shell: after being blown, the salmon-tint became much paler.

The eggs vary very considerably in their general colour, some being of the salmon-hue described above, while others are of a pale greenish stone; both are spotted alike with reddish brown and grey, forming a zone near the larger end. They are five or six in number, nearly an inch in length by eight lines in breadth.

It will be seen that I have followed modern systematists in adopting the generic name of *Enneoctonus* for these two birds. I have done so because I consider there are good grounds for their separation from the genus *Lanius*; for they differ very considerably both in form and colour from the Grey Shrike, for which the latter term is retained.

Usually the sexes are very dissimilar; but Mr. Blyth and other writers have affirmed that the breeding female occasionally assumes the colouring of the male.

The male has a line at the base of the upper mandible, lores, and ear-coverts deep black; head and neck grey, lightest on the crown; back and wing-coverts bright chestnut-red; upper tail-coverts grey; primaries dark brown, narrowly fringed with a reddish hue; secondaries the same, but more broadly margined with rufous; four middle tail-feathers black, very slightly fringed with white at the tip; three lateral feathers for two-thirds of their length from the base white, with black shafts, the apical third black, the outer web of the external feather white to the end, and all three fringed with white at the tip; chin, lower part of the abdomen, and under tail-coverts white; breast, abdomen, and flanks pale vinous rose-colour; irides brownish black; bill, feet, and legs black.

I notice that male examples from Italy are much more brilliantly coloured than those killed in England.

The female somewhat exceeds the male in size, has the head and upper surface light brown, deepening into light-reddish brown on the back and wing-coverts; a whitish line over the eye; ear-coverts brown; wings as in the male; tail brown, slightly fringed with grey at the tip; chin, centre of the lower part of the abdomen, vent, and under tail-coverts dull white; breast, upper part of the abdomen, and flanks light grey, with a semilunar mark of brown at the top of every feather.

It may be thought by some that I have been a little inconsistent in figuring the Rose- and the Stag-beetles with the flowering May; but I find that they occasionally occur at the same time.