parts of that country than in the southern and western. Dr. Baird gives the whole of the temperate regions as the range of the American bird, and moreover adopts Lesson's name of Otus Wilsonianus; but I cannot agree with him and the late Prince Charles Bonaparte in considering the American bird distinct from our own.

The colouring of the eyes of this Owl would indicate that it is a day and not a night flier; this, however, is not strictly the case, for darkness, rather than the bright sunlight, is more in unison with its way of life; but on this point Mr. Hepburn informed Mr. Macgillivray that "Sol will sometimes surprise the nocturnal wanderer, feasting on his prey in the meadow. He seeks the friendly shelter of the hedge-row or neighbouring wood, where he hopes to remain in peace until night again throws her veil over nature. Vain are his hopes; for a prying Wren has discovered the intruder, and sounds an alarm. The Robin, the White-throat, and other birds hasten to the spot. First and foremost are the Chaffinches. They buffet him, peck at and menace him on every side, while the Owl turns his eyes from party to party, evading their blows as well as he can. The uproar is now great, each bird, in its mother-tongue, venting its execrations against the poor Owl. On such occasions, one may get within a few feet of it; the distance varying according to the depth of shade in which he may be sitting. At length he takes wing, generally flies a short distance, often pursued by a Chaffinch or two. On alighting, he is still persecuted; and unless he gains some suitable roosting-place, the alarm-notes of these watchful birds are heard the livelong day."

Mr. Alfred Newton has sent me the following notes:—"I do not know many sights more engaging to a naturalist than one which often presents itself on peering into a thickly growing Scotch fir-tree. A family party of some half-dozen Long-eared Owls may be descried perched in close proximity to the observer's head. Their bodies are drawn up perpendicularly and attenuated in a most marvellous manner, the eartufts nearly erect, or, if not exactly parallel to one another, slightly inclined inwards. Except these, there is nothing to break the stiff rectangle of the bird's outline. Thus they sit, one and all, swaying slowly upon one foot, and gravely winking one eye at the intruder. Underneath such an Owl-roost as this, is certain to be found a large quantity of the pellets ejected by its frequenters; and a good notion of their usual food is to be gathered from an examination of the same. Half-grown rats and mice, chiefly the former, constitute the staple; but small birds contribute no small share; and I have recognized among the remains unquestionable bones of the Wheatear, Willow-Wren, Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Bullfinch, and Yellow Bunting. How the Owls catch them I am unable to say; but I am bound to mention that never in a single instance have I discovered a trace of any game-bird, and I feel assured that the keepers who wage war against the Long-eared Owl for the protection of their young Pheasants or Partridges are not only giving themselves unnecessary trouble, but are also guilty of the folly of exterminating their best friends; for the number of rats destroyed by this species is enormous, and I look upon the rat as the game-preserver's worst enemy."

It breeds in March and April; and if ever it constructs a nest for itself, it is a very slight platform of sticks, placed on the horizontal branch of a fir or other tree; but it generally appropriates the deserted drey of a Squirrel, or the nest of a Pigeon, a Crow, or a Magpie, on which to deposit its four or five white eggs.

The two sexes are so much alike that a description of one will serve for the other. When first hatched, they are clothed in a closely set white down, which gradually puts on a fawn-coloured hue, rayed with a darker tint. On the assumption of real feathers, they assimilate to the colouring of the adult; and the full plumage being once attained, no material change takes place at any season. Mr. Selby states that the young "remain in the nest for more than a month before they are able to fly. If disturbed and handled, they hiss violently, strike with their talons, and at the same time make a snapping noise with their bills. When they quit the nest, they take up their abode in some adjoining tree, and for many subsequent days, indeed for weeks, may be heard after sunset uttering a plaintive but loud call for food, during which time the parent birds are seen diligently employed in hawking for prey."

The anterior portion of the facial discs is white; to this succeeds a lengthened mark of blackish brown, in the centre of which the eyes are seated; beyond this the colour is deep fawn, fading into white on the outer margin; ruff surrounding the discs mottled buffy white and dark brown; ground-colour of the plumage fawn-colour, each feather with a broad stripe of dark brown down the centre; the apices of all the feathers freekled and transversely rayed with greyish white and dark brown; spurious wing dark brown; primaries rich fawn-colour at the base, and crossed alternately on their apical portions with broad bands of dark brown and greyish buff, freekled with dark brown; tail similarly marked, but the bands are narrower and more confused than those of the wings; under surface buff, becoming paler on the centre of the abdomen, vent, and under tail-coverts; feathers of the breast and flanks, and those in front of the thighs, with a conspicuous streak of dark brown down the centre, from which proceed at intervals on either side narrow irregular rays of the same hue; frontal tufts blackish brown, bordered externally with deep fawn-colour, and internally with white, freekled with brown; irides rich fiery orange.

The Plate represents an adult of the natural size, and a nest of young ones, about a fortnight old.