SABINE'S GULL.

Xema Sabini, *Leach.*

La Mouette de Sabine.

This species has been added to the British Fauna in consequence of two examples having been killed in Belfast Bay and one in Dublin Bay, of which notices have been recorded in the 5th No. of the Magazine of Zoology and Botany; it has therefore become necessary to include a figure of it in the present work. It is almost strictly an arctic species, and as we have nothing to add to the account of its natural history published by Dr. Richardson, we prefer quoting the words of this scientific traveller as given in the Fauna Boreali-Americana, to recording the same facts in any language of our own.

"This interesting species of Gull," says Dr. Richardson, "was discovered by Captain Edward Sabine. It was first seen on the 25th of July, at its breeding-station on some low rocky islands, lying off the west coast of Greenland associated in considerable numbers with the Arctic Tern, the nests of both birds being intermingled. It is analogous to the Tern not only in its forked tail, and in its choice of a breeding-place, but also in the boldness which it displays in the protection of its young. The parent birds flew with impetuosity towards persons approaching their nests, and when one was killed, its mate, though frequently fired at, continued on the wing close to the spot. They were observed to get their food on the sea-beach, standing near the water's edge, and picking up the marine insects which were cast on shore. A solitary individual was seen in Prince Regent's Inlet, on Sir Edward Parry's first voyage, and many specimens were procured in the course of the second voyage on Melville Peninsula. Captain Sabine also killed a pair at Spitzbergen, so that it is a pretty general summer visiter to the Arctic seas, and is entitled to be enumerated amongst the European as well as American birds. It arrives in the high northern latitudes in June, and retires to the southward in August. When newly killed it has a delicate pink blush on the under plumage. The eggs, two in number, are deposited on the bare ground, and are hatched in the last week of July. They are an inch and a half in length, of an olive colour with many dark brown blotches."

In summer, the head and upper part of the throat are blackish grey, bounded below by a collar of velvet black; the mantle and wings bluish grey; greater coverts and primaries deep black, the latter tipped with white; edge of the shoulder and the extremities of the secondaries white, forming an oblique band across the wing; neck, all the under surface, and tail pure white; bill black at the base, and yellow at the tip; eyelids red; irides, legs, and feet black.

The young birds of the year have the head mottled with blackish grey and white; back, scapulars, and wing-coverts blackish grey tinged with yellow brown; wing-primaries white with black ends; throat and breast pale ash colour; belly white; upper and under tail-coverts white; tail-feathers white tipped with black.

We have figured an adult male in the summer plumage, of the natural size.