

BLACK-THROATED DIVER.

Colymbus arcticus, Linn.

Le Plongeon Lumme, ou à gorge noire.

THE accompanying figures of the young and adult of the Black-throated Diver were taken from two specimens of exquisite beauty, placed at our disposal by W. Baker, Esq., of Bayfordbury in Hertfordshire, by whom they were shot during his tour through Norway in the pleasant pursuit of natural history. That gentleman informed us that they were both killed upon one of the small lakes of the interior, from which circumstance we may infer that it was an adult, with its own young of that year.

The range of the Black-throated Diver extends over the whole arctic circle, everywhere giving preference to inland waters and small lochs. It must have afforded much pleasure to Sir Wm. Jardine, Bart., and Mr. Selby, during their late visit to the extensive wilds of Sutherlandshire, to observe a pair of these birds inhabiting almost every small loch they visited. Before this period it had not been fully ascertained that this species made any portion of the British Islands a permanent residence, or that it remained in them during the period of incubation. It is of rare occurrence in all the temperate portions of the globe, its migrations being less extended, perhaps, than any other species of its genus, the young, as is generally the case, wandering furthest from home. It is not an unfrequent occurrence to find individuals in their first year's plumage in the London market. While in this stage they often frequent the sea and the mouths of large rivers, where they obtain an abundant supply of fish, crustacea, and other marine animals, which constitute their principal food. It will be scarcely necessary to inform our readers, that when the inland lakes of the northern climes become frozen, the adults retreat to the ocean, where they brave with impunity the severities of the coldest winters. Their power of diving is vigorous and remarkable, not more for swiftness than for the long time they are capable of continuing submersed: it is this amazing power that enables them to avoid with the greatest ease every artifice of man to capture them on the open sea or large lakes.

When fully adult the sexes offer little or no difference in the colouring of their plumage: the young, on the contrary, are clothed in a much more sombre vest, being entirely destitute of the black throat and contrasted bars of white and black which ornament the back and scapularies of the adults.

The nest is placed at the brink of the water; the eggs being generally two in number, of a dark olive brown blotched with spots of black.

Head and neck dusky grey, deepest on the fore part of the head; throat and front of the neck deep black with purple and green reflections; below the throat a narrow transverse band of black; a broad band, longitudinally rayed with white and black, extends from the ears down each side of the neck; upper surface deep glossy black; the greater part of the scapulars and the side feathers of the mantle marked with large white spots, forming on the scapulars several transverse bars; wing-coverts spotted with white; sides and flanks black; the remainder of the under surface being pure white; legs deep brown on the outsides, paler within; bill brownish black; irides reddish brown.

The young undergo three moultings before they attain their full colouring, during which changes they gradually pass from the plumage of the year represented in our Plate to that of the adults.

The Plate represents a male in full plumage, and a young bird of the year, about three fourths of the natural size.