

YUNX TORQUILLA.



CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Rostrum teretiufculum, acuminatum.

Nares concavæ, denudatæ.

Lingua teres, lumbriciformis, longissima, apice mucronata.

Pedes scanforii.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 172.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS, &c.

YUNX ex albo, griseo, nigro, et ferrugineo varia

JYNX s. TORQUILLA.

Bell. av. 76. a.

CUCULUS subgriseus maculatus, rectricibus nigris fasciis undulatis.

Lin Faun. Suec. 1. p. 78. t. 1. f. 78.

YUNX TORQUILLA.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 172.

TORQUILLA STRIATA.

Briss. av. 4. p. 7.

Varias Europæ partes incolit Torquilla, coloribus insignis elegantissime dispositis; e quibus conjunc-

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tis eximia exoritur pulchritudo, cum forsan figillatim conspectis vilescat pretium. In Angliam Aprili mense involat, cumque pullos aluerit, autumnus vix finito, aliam sibi sedem quærit. Facillima auditu raro conspicitur: fallit enim oculos color cortici arboris nec longo intervallo simillimus, aures feriente rapida et canora voce citissime iterata. Vivitur Torquilla eodem fere modo quo picis; linguaque est huic, ut et illis longissima, retractilis, quam ejaculando inter corticis rimas latitantia insecta prædatur. More quoque picorum ova deponit in arborum foraminibus, nidum pene nullum struens, sed molli ligno putrido insidens. Ovis dum incubat femina (quæ interdum quinque parit, interdum octo, alba admodum et semi-pellucida) collum corpusque, si turbetur, miro modo contorquet quasi minitans: unde nomen Torquilla. Narrat doctissimus Derhamus in præcellenti libro Physico-Theologico, se puerum ab hac ave non semel perterritum fuisse, nec e foramine, quo nidificarat ova ausum esse surripere, quasi a serpente repulsum. Latet interdum nidus in cavo altissimo; ut vix discerni possit: quod si quis avem tangere conetur, illico more serpentum sibilat; quod sibilum ipsi etiam pulli fortiter emittunt. Notandum est tantam esse Torquillæ cum cuculo affinitatem, ut ab ipso Linnæo semel in eodem genere conjuncta sit.



Antrochus alpestris Vieillot, *Proc. Zool. Acad. Paris*, 1816, p. 100, pl. 1, fig. 1.

THE WRYNECK.



GENERIC CHARACTER.

Bill roundish, flightly incurvated, weak.

Tongue very long, cylindric, miffle, hard-pointed.

Feet scanforial, *i. e.* two toes forward and two backward.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER, &c.

YUNX (WRYNECK) varied with black, white, grey, and ferruginous.

THE WRYNECK.

Will. orn. p. 138. t. 22.

LE TORCOL.

Briff. orn. 4. p. 4. pl. 1. f. 1.

Buff. ois. 7. p. 84. pl. 3.

Pl. enl. 698.

The Wryneck, so remarkable for the elegant disposition of its colours, which tho' singly considered are far from brilliant, yet in combination produce so beautiful an effect, is a native of several parts of Europe. In our own country it appears in the month of April, and after the breeding season

is over, again migrates before the appearance of winter, or during the autumnal season. Though by no means uncommon, it is much more frequently heard than seen; its note, which consists of a quick succession of several shrill tones, being one of the most predominant amongst the vernal birds; while its colour bears so near a resemblance to the bark of the trees it frequents, as to be inconspicuous except on a very near approach.

In its mode of life the Wryneck bears a very strong affinity to the woodpecker tribe; and like those birds, is furnished with a very long, missile tongue, which it darts into the crevices of trees, and thus catches the insects they contain. It lays its eggs in the holes of trees, in the manner of a woodpecker; making scarce any nest, but contenting itself with the soft surface of the decayed wood. The eggs are from five to eight in number, very white, and semitransparent. When the female is engaged in incubation, she has a habit, when disturbed, of wreathing herself into a number of extraordinary postures in a threatening manner. It is from this circumstance that the name of Wryneck has been given to the bird. The celebrated Derham in his *Physico-Theology* observes that, when a boy, he has more than once been deterred by these threatening contortions from taking the eggs of the Wryneck, "daring no more to venture his hand into the hole than if a serpent had lodged in it." They sometimes, however, build in a hole so deep as to be perfectly secure from attacks of this kind; but if an attempt is made to reach them, they hiss
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in the manner of serpents; and even the young exert this faculty in a most striking degree. I should observe that the Wryneck bears some affinity to the Cuckow, with which it was once associated in the same genus by Linnæus.



Shaw, George. 1793. "The Wryneck, Yunx torquilla [Pl. 156]." *The Naturalist's Miscellany* 5(LI), <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.310735>.

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