

## THE PINE CREEPING WOOD-WARBLER.

† SYLVICOLA PINUS, *Lath.*

PLATE LXXXII.—MALE AND FEMALE.

The Pine Creeping Wood-Warbler, the most abundant of its tribe, is met with from Louisiana to Maine, more profusely in the warmer, and more sparingly in the colder regions, breeding wherever fir or pine trees are to be found. Although it may occasionally be seen on other trees, yet it always prefers those of that remarkable and interesting tribe. I found it on the sandy barrens bordering St. John's River, in East Florida, in full song, early in February. I am pretty certain that they had already formed nests at that early period, and it seems to me not unlikely that this species, as well as some others that breed in that country at the same time, may afterwards travel far to the eastward, and there rear another brood the same year.

In some degree allied to the *Certhiæ* in its habits, it is often seen ascending the trunks and larger branches of trees, hopping against the bark, in search of the larvæ that lurk there. At times it moves sidewise along a branch three or four steps, and turning about, goes on in the same manner, until it has reached a twig, which it immediately examines. Its restless activity is quite surprising: now it gives chase to an insect on wing; now, it is observed spying out those more diminutive species concealed among the blossoms and leaves of the pines; again, it leaves the topmost branches of a tree, flies downwards, and alights sidewise on the trunk of another, which it ascends, changing its position, from right to left, at every remove. It also visits the ground in quest of food, and occasionally betakes itself to the water, to drink or bathe.

It is seldom that an individual is seen by itself going through its course of action, for a kind of sympathy seems to exist in a flock, and in autumn and winter especially, thirty or more may be observed, if not on the same tree, at least not far from each other. Although it feeds on insects, larvæ, and occasionally small crickets, it seems to give a decided preference to a little red insect of the coleopterous order, which is found inclosed in the leaves or stipules of the pine. Low lands seem to suit it best, for it is much less numerous in mountainous countries than in those bordering the sea.

Like many other birds, the Pine Creeping Warbler constructs its nest of different materials, nay even makes it of a different form, in the Southern



and Eastern States. In the Carolinas, for instance, it is usually placed among the dangling fibres of the Spanish moss, with less workmanship and less care, than in the Jerseys, the State of New York, or that of Maine. In the latter, as well as in Massachusetts, where it breeds about the middle of June, it places its nest at a great height, sometimes fifty feet, attaching it to the twigs of a forked branch. Here the nest is small, thin but compact, composed of the slender stems of dried grasses mixed with coarse fibrous roots and the exuviae of caterpillars or other insects, and lined with the hair of the deer, moose, racoon, or other animals, delicate fibrous roots, wool, and feathers. The eggs, which are from four to six, have a very light sea-green tint, all over sprinkled with small pale reddish-brown dots, of which there is a thicker circle near the larger end. In these districts, it seldom breeds more than once in the season, whereas in the Carolinas, Georgia, and the Floridas, where it is a constant resident, it usually has two, sometimes three, broods in the year, and its eggs are deposited on the first days of April, fully a month earlier than in the State above mentioned.

Its flight is short, and exhibits undulating curves of considerable elegance. It migrates entirely by day, flying from tree to tree, and seldom making a longer flight than is necessary for crossing a river. The song is monotonous, consisting at times merely of a continued tremulous sound, which may be represented by the letters *trr-rr-rr-rr*. During the love season, this is changed into a more distinct sound, resembling *twě, twě, tě, tě, tē, tē*. It sings at all hours of the day, even in the heat of summer noon, when the woodland songsters are usually silent.

It is a hardy bird, seldom abandoning the most northern of the Eastern States until the middle of October. I saw none beyond the Province of New Brunswick, and Professor MACCULLOCH of Pictou had not observed it in Nova Scotia. In Newfoundland and Labrador I did not see a single individual.

I have placed a pair of these birds on a branch of their favourite pine; but the colouring of the male is not so brilliant as it is in spring and summer, the individual represented having been drawn in Louisiana in the winter, where, as well as in the Carolinas, the Floridas, and all the Southern Districts, it is a constant resident.

I have already mentioned that the Pine Creeping Warbler is the parent of VIGORS's Warbler. Of this fact I gave intimation to the Prince of Musignano, during his recent visit to London. I found it abundant in the Texas, where it breeds.



PINE WARBLER, *Sylvia pinus*, Nutt. Man., vol. i. p. 387.

PINE CREEPING WARBLER, *Sylvia pinus*, Aud. Orn. Biog., vol. ii. p. 232.

VIGORS'S WARBLER, *Sylvia Vigorsii*, Aud. Orn. Biog., vol. i. p. 153. Young.

Wings of moderate length, with the outer three quills almost equal, the first and second longest; tail emarginate. Male with the upper parts light yellowish-green, inclining to olive, the rump brighter; a streak over the eye, the eyelids, throat, breast, and sides, bright yellow, with a greenish tinge, the rest of the lower parts white; wings and tail blackish-brown; secondary coverts and first row of small coverts largely tipped with dull white; primaries edged with whitish, secondaries with brownish-grey; outer two tail-feathers with a patch of white on the inner web, near the end. Female with the upper parts yellowish-brown, tinged with grey, the lower parts of paler and duller tints than in the male. Young similar to the female.

Male, 5, 8.

From Texas to Maine. Very abundant. Resident in the Southern and Middle States.

#### THE YELLOW PINE.

PINUS VARIABILIS, *Pursch*, Flor. Amer. Sept., vol. ii. p. 643.—P. MITIS, *Michaux*, Arbr. Forest., vol. i. p. 52. pl. 3.—MONECIA MONADELPHIA, *Linn.*—CONIFERÆ, *Juss.*

This species is known by various names:—Long-leaved Pine, Yellow Pine, Red Pine, and Pitch Pine. It attains a height of a hundred feet, and has a diameter of four. The leaves are very long; three in a sheath, and fasciculate at the ends of the branches. It is very abundant in the Southern States, where it is employed for various purposes, more especially for the inclosure of cultivated fields, and for ship-building and domestic architecture. Most of the tar of the Southern States is obtained from this tree.





*Pine-creeping Wood-Warbler*  
*Yellow Pine. Pinus variabilis.*

1. Male 2 Female.



Audubon, John James. 1841. "The Pine Creeping Wood-Warbler, *Sylvicola pinus*, Lath. [Pl. 82]." *The birds of America : from drawings made in the United States and their territories* 2, 37–39. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.319195>.

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