CANADIAN WOODPECKER.

+ *PICUS CANADENSIS*, Gmel.

PLATE CCLVIII.—MALE.

This species, which has been overlooked by all the recent writers on the birds of North America, although described and figured by BUFFON, I again introduce to your notice. If you compare the figure of it with that of the Hairy Woodpecker, *Picus villosus*, you will perceive that it is much larger, and somewhat differently marked, although extremely similar in form and colours.

The most southern localities in which this species has been observed in the United States, in so far as I have been able to trace it, whether personally or by means of my friend Dr. TRUDEAU, are the northern portions of the State of Pennsylvania, in winter, where, however, it seems to be rare. It is more plentiful at that season in the same parallel in the State of New York, beyond which, northward, it is abundant up to the 56th degree, but then yields in frequency to the Common Three-toed Woodpecker.

It was in the course of my journey through the State of Maine, on which I was accompanied by my wife and sons, that I became aware of its being distinct from the Hairy Woodpecker. There I found it very abundant in the woods, around the farms, by the roads, and on the fences. Its notes alone suffice to distinguish it from every other species, being louder and much shriller than those of *Picus villosus*. It also resorts to prostrate decaying logs lying on the ground, in quest of food, much more than that species does, and quite as much as the Pileated Woodpecker, *P. pileatus*. During its flight, the rustling sound of its wings is very remarkable; its passage from one tree to another appears more laborious, and in all its movements it is less active, restless, or petulant, than the Hairy Woodpecker. Those which I examined contained remains of large coleopterous insects, together with pieces of lichens.

Of its manner of breeding, eggs, or young, I unfortunately know nothing. The female differs from the male in little more than in wanting the red patch on each side of the occiput.

PICUS CANADENSIS, Gmel. Syst. Nat., vol. i. p. 437.

PICUS (DENDROCOPUS) VILLOSUS, *Hairy Woodpecker*, Swains. and Rich. F. Bor. Amer., vol. ii. p. 305.

CANADIAN WOODPECKER, *Picus canadensis*, Aud. Orn. Biog., vol. v. p. 188.

Male, $10\frac{1}{2}$, $17\frac{3}{4}$.

From the northern parts of New York to the Fur Countries. Common. Migratory in winter to New York.

Adult Male.

Bill about the length of the head, straight, strong, angular, compressed toward the tip, which is truncate and cuneate. Upper mandible with the dorsal line straight, the ridge very narrow, the sides sloping and flat, the lateral angle or ridge nearer the edge, which is sharp, direct, and overlapping. Lower mandible with the angle short and rather wide, the dorsal line straight, the ridge narrow, the sides flat and grooved for some way beyond the angle, convex toward the edges, which are sharp and inflected, the tip narrow. Nostrils oblong, basal, concealed by the feathers, and placed near the margin.

Head large, ovate; neck rather short; body full. Feet very short; tarsus short, compressed, feathered anteriorly more than one-third down, scutellate in the rest of its extent, and with a series of large scales behind; toes four, first small, but stout; fourth considerably longer than the third; second and third united at the base; all scutellate above. Claws large, much curved, compressed, laterally grooved, very acute.

Plumage very soft, full, and blended. A large tuft of recurved stiffish feathers on each side of the base of the upper mandible, concealing the nostrils; the feathers in the angle of the lower mandible also stiffish, and directed forwards. Wings rather long; the first quill very small, being only an inch and a twelfth long, the second two inches longer, and seven-twelfths shorter than the third, which is two-twelfths shorter than the fourth, this being the longest, but exceeding the fifth only by one-twelfth; secondaries broad and rounded. Tail of moderate length, cuneate, of twelve feathers, of which the lateral, which are rounded and unworn, are only one inch and two-twelfths long, the next, also unworn, are eleven-twelfths of an inch shorter than the middle, which are pointed, sometimes without having the very strong shafts worn, but also sometimes having them broken off at the end; all the rest are more or less pointed.

Bill bluish-grey, toward the end black; iris brown; feet bluish-grey. The tufts of bristly feathers over the nostrils, and the angle of the low jaw, are dull yellow; the upper part of the head and the hind neck are glossy black; over each eye is a band of white, continuous with a transverse band of scarlet on the occiput, usually interrupted in the middle; a black band from near the bill to the eye, continued behind it over the auriculars, and joining the black of the hind neck; beneath this black band is one of white, proceeding from the angle of the mouth and curving backwards below the middle of the neck, so as to meet its fellow behind; this band is succeeded

by another of black, proceeding from the base of the lower mandible, and continuous with the black of the shoulders. All the upper parts may be described as black, tinged with brown behind; the feathers along the middle of the back tipped with white; the wing-coverts, the anterior excepted, and the quills spotted with the same, there being on the four longest primaries seven spots on the outer, and five on the inner web, on most of the secondaries five on each web, but on the outer quill only one patch on each web, and on the second three spots on the outer, and four on the inner web. The four middle tail-feathers are glossy black, the rest black towards the base, that colour gradually diminishing so that the outermost is almost entirely white. The lower parts are white, slightly tinged with reddish on the fore neck and breast.

Length to end of tail $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches, to end of wings 8; to end of claws $9\frac{1}{4}$; extent of wings $17\frac{3}{4}$: bill along the ridge $1\frac{5}{12}$; along the edge of lower mandible $1\frac{3}{4}$; wing from flexure $5\frac{1}{12}$; tail $3\frac{6}{12}$; tarsus $\frac{10\frac{1}{2}}{12}$; hind toe $\frac{3\frac{1}{2}}{12}$, its claw $\frac{3}{12}$; second toe $\frac{5\frac{1}{2}}{12}$, its claw $\frac{6}{12}$; third toe $\frac{7\frac{1}{2}}{12}$, its claw $\frac{6\frac{1}{2}}{12}$; fourth toe $\frac{8}{12}$, its claw $\frac{6\frac{1}{2}}{12}$.

The female, which is somewhat smaller than the male, differs only in being more tinged with brown, especially on the quills, and in wanting the red patches on the occiput.

In form and colour, this species differs in no appreciable degree from *Picus villosus*, which it also resembles in the texture of its plumage, and in the relative proportion of the quills and tail-feathers. But it is much larger, its bill is proportionally stouter, and its fourth toe a little more elongated. The differences, however, are extremely slight.

The roof of the mouth is anteriorly nearly flat, with a prominent median line; the posterior aperture of the nares linear, $9\frac{1}{2}$ twelfths long, and margined with papillæ. The tongue is $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, somewhat cylindrical for 11 twelfths, in the rest of its extent slender, tapering, with a horny sheath, having eight reversed bristles on each margin. The horns of the hyoid bone pass along the median line of the head until they are over the middle of the eyes, when they turn to the right side, and are curved along a deep groove on the anterior edge of the orbit, passing under the eye to opposite its middle. The œsophagus is 3 inches 2 twelfths long, $3\frac{1}{4}$ twelfths in width, and of nearly uniform diameter. The stomach is rather small, elliptical, 9 twelfths long, 8 twelfths broad; its lateral muscles moderately developed. The contents are larvæ and coleopterous insects. The epithelium is dense but thin, and longitudinally rugous. The intestine is 9 inches long, $2\frac{1}{2}$ twelfths in width at its anterior part. There are no cœca.

The trachea is $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, slender, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ twelfths in breadth, a little flattened, and of about 60 rings. The bronchi are of moderate length,

slender, of about 12 half rings. The contractor muscles are moderate; the sterno-tracheals come off close to the inferior larynx, which is destitute of muscles.

PHILLIPS' WOODPECKER.

+*PICUS PHILLIPSII*, *Aud.*

PLATE CCLIX.—MALES.

The only specimen of this beautiful Woodpecker that I have seen, an adult male, was sent to me by my friend Mr. NUTTALL, who procured it in the State of Massachusetts. Nothing is known as to its habits. In naming it after my friend BENJAMIN PHILLIPS, Esq., F.R.S., I have the pleasure of testifying my esteem and gratitude towards one whose kindness and generosity has often been experienced by me and every member of my family. The beauty of this bird has induced me to give two figures of it, by which its form and markings may be better seen.

PHILLIPS' WOODPECKER, *Picus Phillipsii*, *Aud. Orn. Biog.*, vol. v. p. 186.

Male, $10\frac{1}{2}$; wing, 5.

Massachusetts. Very rare.

Adult Male.

Bill about the length of the head, straight, strong, angular, compressed toward the tip, which is pointed. Upper mandible with the dorsal line straight, the ridge very narrow, the sides sloping and flat, the lateral angle half-way between the ridge and the edge at the base, and running out upon the latter about two-thirds of its length, the edges sharp and overlapping, the tip acuminate. Lower mandible with the angle short and rather wide, the dorsal line straight, the ridge narrow, the sides convex toward the edges, which are sharp and inflected, the tip acuminate. Nostrils oblong, basal, concealed by the feathers, and placed near the margin.

Head large, ovate; neck rather short; body full. Feet very short; tarsus short, compressed, feathered anteriorly more than one-third down, scutellate in the rest of its extent, and with a series of large scales behind; toes four;

W. H.

Canadian Woodpecker.

Male

Audubon, John James. 1842. "Canadian Woodpecker, *Picus canadensis*, Gmel. [Pl. 258]." *The birds of America : from drawings made in the United States and their territories* 4, 235–238. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.319373>.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/125069>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.319373>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/319373>

Holding Institution

Smithsonian Libraries

Sponsored by

Biodiversity Heritage Library

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: NOT_IN_COPYRIGHT

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.