RED-SHAFTED WOODPECKER.

+PICUS MEXICANUS, Swains.

PLATE CCLXXIV.—MALE AND FEMALE.

This beautiful species was first described by Mr. SWAINSON from Mexican specimens. The extent of its distribution is as yet imperfectly known, especially toward the north. My friend Mr. NUTTALL states, that "among the narrow belt of forest which borders Lorimie's Fork of the Platte, we met with the Mexican Colaptes, and never scarcely lost sight of it to the shores of the Pacific. Its manners in all respects are so entirely similar to those of the common species, that the same description applies to both. It is, however, always a much shyer bird, and frequents the ground less. In the breeding season it utters the same echoing note of *whittoe, whittoe, whittoe*; the males at the same time dodging after, and pursuing each other in jealousy and anger. They also burrow into the oak or pine trees, and lay white eggs, after the manner of the whole family. How far they proceed to the north I am unable to say." Mr. TOWNSEND informs me that it is known to the Chinook Indians by the name of *A-Koptil-Kow*, and in regard to habits is similar to *Picus auratus*, the male equally partaking of the task of incubation.

I have represented the male and the female.

COLAPTES MEXICANUS, Swains. Synop. Birds of Mex. Phil. Mag. N. 84.

COLAPTES MEXICANUS, *Red-shafted Woodpecker*, Swains. and Rich. F. Bor. Amer., vol. ii. p. 315.

RED-SHAFTED WOODPECKER, Nutt. Man., vol. ii. p. 603.

RED-SHAFTED WOODPECKER, *Picus Mexicanus*, Aud. Orn. Biog., vol. v. p. 174.

Male, $13\frac{1}{2}$, wing, $6\frac{10}{12}$. Female, 13.

Rocky Mountains, Columbia river, and northward to the Saskatchewan. Abundant. Migratory.

Adult Male.

Bill slightly arched, strong, nearly as long as the head, angular, compressed at the tip, which is scarcely truncate or cuneate. Upper mandible with the dorsal line somewhat arched, the ridge narrow, the sides sloping, the lateral angle quite close to the ridge, the edges sharp and overlapping; lower mandible with the angle long and rather narrow, the crural outline a

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Red-shafted Woodpecker.

1. Male 2. Female.

little concave, the dorsal straight, the ridge narrow, the sides convex, the edges inflected, the tip acute. Nostrils basal, oblong, about half-way between the ridge and the margin, and concealed by the feathers.

Head of moderate size, ovate; neck rather short; body rather full. Feet very short; tarsus short, compressed, anteriorly feathered one-third down, covered with six large scutella in the rest of its extent, thin-edged, with an internal series of small scutella behind; toes four; first small, third and fourth about equal, second and third united at the base; claws large, curved, compressed, laterally grooved, very acute.

Plumage very soft, full, blended. Feathers at the base of the upper mandible stiffish and directed forwards. Wings of moderate length, the fifth quill longest, the fourth one-twelfth of an inch shorter, the third three-twelfths shorter than the fourth, and exceeding the second by one inch, the first only one inch and nine-twelfths long. Tail of moderate length, cuneate, of twelve feathers, all pointed except the outer, which is only an inch and three-quarters in length, the next one inch shorter than the middle.

Bill dusky above and at the tip, light greyish-blue beneath. Iris light brown. Feet greyish-blue. Upper part of the head and hind neck light purplish-grey; forehead and a band over the eye dull red; the sides and fore part of the neck ash-grey, with an oblong patch of bright carmine from the base of the lower mandible. The upper parts generally are light greyish-brown, transversely spotted with black; the hind part of the back white; the upper tail-coverts black, barred with white. The shafts of the quills and their coverts are orange-red; the smaller coverts coloured like the back; primaries and their coverts brownish-black, most of them externally spotted with greyish-brown; secondaries brownish-black, spotted on both margins with greyish-brown. Tail-feathers brownish-black, the two lateral on each side with several light brown spots along the margin, the rest faintly edged with yellowish-white, the shafts of all toward the base, and the greater part of their lower surface orange-red, tinged with vermilion, as is the lower surface of the wings. On the fore part of the breast is a crescentic patch of black; the rest of the lower parts are reddish-white, with numerous round black spots.

Length to end of tail $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches; bill along the ridge $1\frac{1}{2}$, along the edge of lower mandible $1\frac{9}{12}$; wing from flexure $6\frac{10}{12}$; tail $4\frac{10}{12}$; tarsus $1\frac{2}{12}$; first toe $\frac{4\frac{1}{2}}{12}$, its claw $\frac{4}{12}$; second toe $\frac{8}{12}$, its claw $\frac{6\frac{1}{2}}{12}$; third toe $\frac{10\frac{1}{2}}{12}$, its claw $\frac{7}{12}$; fourth toe $\frac{9\frac{1}{2}}{12}$, its claw $\frac{7}{12}$.

Adult Female.

The female resembles the male; but has the tints somewhat duller, and wants the red patch on the cheeks, that part being merely tinged with red. An individual, marked by Mr. TOWNSEND "Female, Columbia river, April

1, 1836," is similar to the female as above described, but has the lower surface of the wings and tail, with the shafts, of a much paler tint, approaching to dull yellow, which induces me to think that this species does not attain its perfect colouring until at least the second year.

Length to end of tail 13 inches; bill along the ridge $1\frac{4}{12}$.

FAMILY XXVII.—CUCULINÆ. CUCKOOS.

Bill long or of moderate length, broader than high at the base, compressed toward the end, straight or somewhat arched; upper mandible with the dorsal line convex or arched, the ridge indistinct, the sides convex, the edges arched, sharp, without notch, the tip decurved; lower mandible with the angle rather short, the dorsal line straight or decurved, the ridge thin, the sides erect or convex, the tip slightly decurved, acute. Nostrils basal, oblong, generally marginate. Head of moderate size; neck of ordinary length; body rather slender. Feet of moderate length; tarsus with broad scutella; toes long, slender, flat beneath, outer directed outwards or backwards. Claws long or of moderate length, arched, compressed, acute. Plumage blended; wings generally long, with the first quill short, the third and fourth longest. Tail long, of ten feathers; upper mandible very narrow beneath, with three longitudinal ridges; tongue slender, emarginate, and papillate at the base, the tip horny, thin, lacerated, and slit; œsophagus rather wide, without dilatation; stomach large, round, with the muscular coat very thin, the epithelium soft, rugous; intestine of moderate length and width; cœca long, oblong, narrowed at the base. Trachea simple, with a single very slender pair of inferior laryngeal muscles.

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Red-shafted Woodpecker.

1. Male 2. Female.

Audubon, John James. 1842. "Red-Shafted Woodpecker, *Picus mexicanus*, Swains. [Pl. 274]." *The birds of America : from drawings made in the United States and their territories* 4, 290–292. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.319389>.

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