base sloping outwards; the dorsal line ascending and slightly convex, the edges sharp, the tip rather acute.

Head of moderate size, oblong, the forehead rounded. Legs rather long and slender; tibia bare half an inch above the joint; tarsus slender, compressed, covered with angular scales, of which the anterior are much larger; toes short, slender, with numerous scutella above, marginate, the outer connected with the middle by a short membrane. Claws small, compressed, slightly arched, rather acute.

Plumage soft, the feathers rather distinct on the upper parts, blended on the lower. Wings long and pointed; primary quills tapering, the first longest by a quarter of an inch, the rest rapidly graduated; inner secondaries tapering and elongated, one of them nearly as long as the outer primary when the wing is closed. Tail of moderate length, even, of twelve feathers.

Bill black. Feet light dull brownish-yellow. Forehead, a band over the eye, fore part of neck, and all the rest of the lower surface, white; top of the head and nape dark yellowish-brown, sides and hind part of the neck dull ochre-yellow, which is the prevailing colour on the upper parts, the feathers being broadly margined with it, while their central portion is greyish-brown. Wing-coverts lighter; primary coverts and quills dusky, their shafts and margins white, that colour becoming more extended on the inner and on some of the secondaries, so as to form a conspicuous patch on the wing; inner secondaries like the back. Tail yellowish-brown, tipped with yellowish-white, the two outer broadly margined with the same.

Length to end of tail about $8\frac{1}{4}$ inches, to end of wings the same, to end of claws $9\frac{1}{4}$; wing from flexure $6\frac{1}{8}$; tail $2\frac{1}{2}$; tarsus $1\frac{4}{8}$; middle toe $\frac{3}{4}$, claw $\frac{1}{4}$.

WILSON'S PLOVER.

† *CHARADRIUS WILSONIUS*, *Ord.*

PLATE CCCXIX.—MALE AND FEMALE.

Reader, imagine yourself standing motionless on some of the sandy shores between South Carolina and the extremity of Florida, waiting with impatience for the return of day;—or, if you dislike the idea, imagine me there. The air is warm and pleasant, the smooth sea reflects the feeble glimmerings

Wilson's Phalarope

1 Male, 2 Female.

Drawn from Nature by J. J. Audubon. H.S. 1718.

Engraved & Col'd by J. T. Bowen, Phila.

of the fading stars, the sound of living thing is not heard; nature, universal nature, is at rest. And here am I, inhaling the grateful sea-air, with eyes intent on the dim distance. See the bright blaze that issues from the verge of the waters! and now the sun himself appears, and all is life, or seems to be; for, as the influence of the Divinity is to the universe, so is that of the sun to the things of this world. Far away beyond that treacherous reef, floats a gallant bark, that seems slumbering on the bosom of the waters like a silvery sea-bird. Gentle breezes now creep over the ocean, and ruffle its surface into tiny wavelets. The ship glides along, the fishes leap with joy, and on my ear comes the well known note of the bird which bears the name of one whom every ornithologist must honour. Long have I known the bird myself, and yet desirous of knowing it better, I have returned to this beach many successive seasons for the purpose of observing its ways, examining its nest, marking the care with which it rears its young, and the attachment which it manifests to its mate. Well, let the scene vanish! and let me present you with the results of my observations.

WILSON'S Plover! I love the name because of the respect I bear towards him to whose memory the bird has been dedicated. How pleasing, I have thought, it would have been to me, to have met with him on such an excursion, and, after having procured a few of his own birds, to have listened to him as he would speak of a thousand interesting facts connected with his favourite science and my ever-pleasing pursuits. How delightful to have talked, among other things, of the probable use of the *double claws* which I have found attached to the toes of the species which goes by his name, and which are also seen in other groups of shore and sea birds. Perhaps he might have informed me why the claws of some birds are pectinated on one toe and not on the rest, and why that toe itself is so cut. But alas! WILSON was with me only a few times, and then *nothing* worthy of his attention was procured.

This interesting species, which always looks to me as if in form a miniature copy of the Black-bellied Plover, is a constant resident in the southern districts of the Union. There it breeds, and there too it spends the winter. Many individuals, no doubt, move farther south, but great numbers are at all times to be met with from Carolina to the mouths of the Mississippi, and in all these places I have found it the whole year round. Some go as far to the eastward as Long Island in the State of New York, where, however, they are considered as rarities; but beyond this, none, I believe, are seen along our eastern shores. This circumstance has seemed the more surprising to me, that its relative the Piping Plover proceeds as far as the Magdeleine Islands; and that the latter bird should also breed in the Carolinas a month earlier than WILSON'S Plover ever does, seems to me not less astonishing.

WILSON'S Plover begins to lay its eggs about the time when the young of the Piping Plover are running after their parents. Twenty or thirty yards from the uppermost beat of the waves, on the first of June, or some day not distant from it, the female may be seen scratching a small cavity in the shelly sand, in which she deposits four eggs, placing them carefully with the broad end outermost. The eggs, which measure an inch and a quarter by seven and a half eighths, are of a dull cream colour, sparingly sprinkled all over with dots of pale purple and spots of dark brown. The eggs vary somewhat in size, and in their ground colour, but less than those of many other species of the genus. The young follow their parents as soon as they are hatched, and the latter employ every artifice common to birds of this family, to entice their enemies to follow them and thus save their offspring.

The flight of this species is rapid, elegant, and protracted. While traveling from one sand-beach or island to another, they fly low over the land or water, emitting a fine clear soft note. Now and then, when after the breeding season they form into flocks of twenty or thirty, they perform various evolutions in the air, cutting backwards and forwards, as if inspecting the spot on which they wish to alight, and then suddenly descend, sometimes on the sea-beach, and sometimes on the more elevated sands at a little distance from it. They do not run so nimbly as the Piping Plovers, nor are they nearly so shy. I have in fact frequently walked up so as to be within ten yards or so of them. They seldom mix with other species, and they shew a decided preference to solitary uninhabited spots.

Their food consists principally of small marine insects, minute shell-fish, and sand-worms, with which they mix particles of sand. Towards autumn they become almost silent, and being then very plump, afford delicious eating. They feed fully as much by night as by day, and the large eyes of this as of other species of the genus, seem to fit them for nocturnal searchings.

The young birds assemble together, and spend the winter months apart from the old ones, which are easily recognised by their lighter tints. While in the Floridas, near St. Augustine, in the months of December and January, I found this species much more abundant than any other; and there were few of the Keys that had a sandy beach, or a rocky shore, on which one or more pairs were not observed.

WILSON'S PLOVER, *Charadrius Wilsonius*, Ord, Amer. Orn. vol. ix. p. 77.

CHARADRIUS WILSONIUS, Bonap. Syn., p. 296.

WILSON'S PLOVER, Nutt. Man., vol. ii. p. 21.

WILSON'S PLOVER, *Charadrius Wilsonius*, Aud. Orn. Biog., vol. iii. p. 73; vol. v. p. 577.

Male, $7\frac{8}{12}$, $14\frac{1}{4}$.

Common, and breeds from Texas along the coast to Long Island. Resident in the Southern States.

Adult Female.

Bill as long as the head, stout, straight, cylindrical, obtuse, and somewhat turgid at the tip. Upper mandible with the dorsal line straight until towards the end, when it is slightly arched and declinate, the sides convex, the edges sharp and slightly inflected. Nasal groove extending to about half the length of the bill; nostrils lateral, linear, direct, in the lower part of the bare membrane. Lower mandible with the angle rounded, the dorsal line convex and ascending, the back broad, the sides convex, the edges inflected.

Head large, a little compressed, the forehead prominent; eyes large. Neck short. Body rather full. Wings long. Legs rather long, slender; tibia bare a little above the joint; tarsus of ordinary length, somewhat compressed, covered with angular scales; toes small and slender, covered above with numerous small scutella, first toe wanting, fourth longer than second, third longest, the two outer connected at the base by a pretty large web; claws small, slightly arched, much compressed, obtuse.

Plumage soft and rather blended. Wings long, narrow, primaries nearly straight, narrow and tapering, the first longest, second a little shorter, the rest rapidly graduated; outer secondaries very short, inner elongated so as to extend as far as the second primary. Tail of moderate length, straight, rounded, of twelve feathers.

Bill black. Edges of eyelids grey; iris reddish-brown. Feet light flesh-coloured; claws dusky. The general colour of the plumage above is light brownish-grey. Lower part of forehead and a broad streak over the eyes white; throat white, that colour extending narrow behind so as to form a collar, below which is another of the general tint of the back across the fore neck. The rest of the lower parts white. Quills and tail of a deeper greyish-brown, the shafts white, the two lateral tail-feathers whitish.

Length to end of tail $7\frac{8}{12}$ inches, to end of wings $7\frac{7}{12}$, to end of claws $8\frac{8}{12}$; extent of wings $14\frac{1}{4}$; wing from flexure 5; tail $2\frac{1}{4}$; bill along the back $\frac{9\frac{1}{2}}{12}$, along the edges 1; tarsus $1\frac{2}{12}$; middle toe $\frac{10}{12}$, its claw $\frac{2}{12}$.

Young Male in winter plumage.

The adult male is similar in colouring to the female, as described above, but the lore is dusky, the white band on the forehead is surmounted by one of brownish-black, and there is a half collar of the same colour across the neck in front.

The palate as in the other species, but at its anterior part commence three prominent ridges, which run to the end of the upper mandible. The tongue is 8 twelfths long, rather fleshy, narrow, flattened above, with a median groove, the point narrow, but rounded, with a thin horny edge. The width of the mouth is $4\frac{1}{4}$ twelfths. The œsophagus, *a b c*, is 3 inches 4 twelfths long, much wider than in the two preceding species, its breadth at the top

being 5 twelfths, at the distance of 1 inch 4 twelfths; the proventriculus, *b c*, 4 twelfths in breadth, its glands forming a belt 6 twelfths in breadth. The stomach, *c d e*, is rather large, roundish, compressed, 9 twelfths in length, 10 twelfths in breadth; the lateral muscles 5 twelfths in thickness; the epithelium remarkably dense, thick, with two broad granulated ridges on each side, forming grinding surfaces. The intestine, *e f g h*, is rather short, and wider than in the other species; its length $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches, its width at the upper part 4 twelfths, diminishing to 2 twelfths. Cæca 1 inch 4 twelfths long, cylindrical, 1 twelfth in width; their distance from the extremity $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Trachea $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches long, flattened, from 2 twelfths to 1 twelfth in breadth; its rings about 90, cartilaginous. Bronchial half rings about 15. Lateral and sterno-tracheal muscles strong; a single pair of inferior laryngeal muscles. Adult male.

AMERICAN RING PLOVER.

† *CHARADRIUS SEMIPALMATUS*, Bonap.

PLATE CCCXX.—MALE AND YOUNG.

I have had great pleasure in observing the migrations of this species, particularly in early spring, when great numbers enter the southern portions of the United States, on their way northward, where it is now well known to

Wilson's Phalarope

1. Male. 2. Female.

Drawn from Nature by J. J. Audubon. H.S. 1718.

Engraved & Col'd by J. T. Bowen, Phila.

Audubon, John James. 1842. "Wilson's Plover, *Charadrius wilsonius*, Ord. [Pl. 319]." *The birds of America : from drawings made in the United States and their territories* 5, 214–218. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.319432>.

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