HUTCHINS' GOOSE.

†ANSER HUTCHINSII, *Richardson.*

PLATE CCCLXXVII.—ADULT.

Although it was not my good fortune while in the State of Maine, or on the coast of Labrador, to meet with this bird, I have no doubt that its periodical appearance along our eastern coast will ere long be fully established. This is the more to be expected as Dr. RICHARDSON informs us that it is abundant about Hudson's Bay, where it was long mistaken for the Brent, or an emaciated Canada Goose. In the mean time, having been presented with a specimen by my highly esteemed and gallant friend Captain JAMES CLARK Ross, I have embraced the opportunity thus offered, of laying before you a representation, the first I believe that has yet appeared, of HUTCHINS' Goose.

For fifteen months, rendered trebly long and wearisome by heavy and difficult marches, under the most distressing feelings, that most amiable and accomplished traveller carried with him many specimens of rare birds, with the view of contributing to the advancement of our knowledge. Would, reader, that you could sympathize with me in the feelings of pride and pleasure with which I call him friend. May his name be as extensively known as his worth deserves!

Some weeks after my drawing was finished, and when I had arrived in Edinburgh, I had the gratification of receiving a long and most interesting letter from him, of which I present you with an extract. "I have very great pleasure in having it now in my power to offer to your acceptance the specimen of this interesting species from which your drawing was taken. It was the child of my solicitude, and my constant companion during a long and tedious journey, after the abandonment of our ship, until our being received on board the *Isabella*, an interval of fifteen months; and this will account in a great measure for the miserable plight in which the specimen first came into your hands. I will dispose of it according to your wishes, and am most happy to place it in the hands of one who knows so well how to appreciate the interesting associations connected with it.

"These birds arrived in flocks about the middle of June, in the neighbourhood of Felix Harbour, and soon dispersed in pairs to their breeding place.

CP
Hutchins's Goose.

Drawn From Nature by J. J. Audubon, F.R.S.E.L.S.

Adult Male

Litho^d. Printed & Col^d by J. T. Bowen, Philad.^a

At Igloodik, the only place where we had before met with them, their nests were found in the marshes near the sea; but on this occasion several pairs constructed their nests on a ledge of rock near the foot of a high precipice; immediately above them the Dovekies, Loons, several species of Gulls, and near its summit, the Jer-Falcon and Raven, built their nests.

"From three to four eggs were found in each nest, of a pure white, and of an oval form, measuring 3.1 inch by 2.1, and weighing from 1800 to 2000 grains.

"The female bird is smaller than the male. To the measurements given by Dr. RICHARDSON, which are very accurate, we may add that its extent of wings is fifty inches, and that it averages about four pounds and a half of weight. Its flesh is of a most exquisite flavour."

ANSER HUTCHINSII, *Hutchins' Bernacle Goose*, Swains. and Rich. F. Bor. Amer., vol. ii. p. 470.

HUTCHINS' GOOSE, *Anser Hutchinsii*, Aud. Orn. Biog., vol. iii. p. 526.

Adult, 25, 50.

Breeds in the Arctic Regions. Columbia river. Abundant.

Adult.

Bill shorter than the head, higher than broad at the base, somewhat conical, depressed towards the end, rounded at the tip. Upper mandible with the dorsal line sloping, the ridge slightly flattened at the base, convex in the rest of its extent, the sides sloping, the edges soft, the oblique internal lamellæ about thirty; the unguis roundish, convex. Nasal groove oblong, parallel to the ridge, filled by the soft membrane of the bill; nostrils medial, lateral, longitudinal, narrow-elliptical, open, pervious. Lower mandible straight, with the angle very long, narrow and rounded, the edges with about forty oblique lamellæ.

Head small, oblong, compressed. Neck long and very slender. Body full. Feet short, stout, placed behind the centre of the body; legs bare a little above the joint; tarsus short, a little compressed, covered all round with angular scales, those behind smaller; hind toe very small, with a narrow membrane, third the longest, fourth considerably shorter, but longer than second; all reticulated above at the base, but with narrow transverse scutella towards the end; the three anterior connected by reticulated webs, the outer with a thick margin, the inner with the edge more dilated. Claws small, arched, rather compressed, except that of the middle toe, which is bent obliquely inwards and depressed, with a curved edge.

Plumage close, blended on the neck and lower parts of the body, compact on the upper. The feathers of the head and neck very narrow, of the back

very broad and abrupt, of the breast and belly broadly rounded. Wings long; primaries strong, curved, the second longest, but the first and third almost as long, the rest rapidly graduated; secondaries long, rather narrow, rounded. Tail short, slightly rounded, of sixteen rounded feathers.

Bill, feet, and claws black. Iris brown. Head and two upper thirds of the neck glossy black. A large subtriangular patch of white on each side of the head and neck. The general colour of the upper parts is brownish-grey, the feathers margined with paler; of the lower parts pale greyish-brown, margined with yellowish-grey; the abdomen and lower tail-coverts white; the hind part of the back brownish-black. The primary quills and tail-feathers are deep brown.

Length to end of tail 25 inches, extent of wings 50; wing from flexure $16\frac{3}{4}$; tail $5\frac{3}{4}$; bill along the back $1\frac{1}{2}$, along the edge of lower mandible $1\frac{1}{2}$; tarsus $2\frac{1}{2}$; middle toe 2, its claw $\frac{4}{12}$. Weight $4\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.

In the Fauna Boreali-Americana, the tail-feathers are stated to be fourteen. In my specimen they are sixteen, and it is probable that the full number is eighteen, as the two middle ones seem to be wanting.

THE BERNACLE GOOSE.

+ANSER LEUCOPSIS, *Bechst.*

PLATE CCCLXXVIII.—MALE AND FEMALE.

Several old gunners on the coast of Massachusetts and Maine, who were Englishmen by birth, assured me that they had killed Bernacles there, and that these birds brought a higher price in the markets than the Common Brent Geese. The Prince of Musignano states in his Synopsis that they are very rare and accidental in the United States, and Mr. NUTTALL says that they are "mere stragglers" there. For my part, I acknowledge that I never met with one of them, either along the coast or in the interior, although I have seen beautiful mounted specimens in various parts. Being neither anxious to add to our Fauna, nor willing unnecessarily to detract from it, I have figured a pair of these birds, with the hope that ere long, the assertions of the gunners, and those of the authors above mentioned, may be abundantly

CP
Hutchins's Goose.

Drawn From Nature by J. J. Audubon, F.R.S., E.L.S.

Adult Male

Litho^d, Printed & Col^d by J. T. Bowen, Philad.^a

Audubon, John James. 1843. "Hutchins' Goose, *Anser hutchinsii*, richardson. [Pl. 377]." *The birds of America : from drawings made in the United States and their territories* 6, 198–200. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.319491>.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/124857>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.319491>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/319491>

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>.