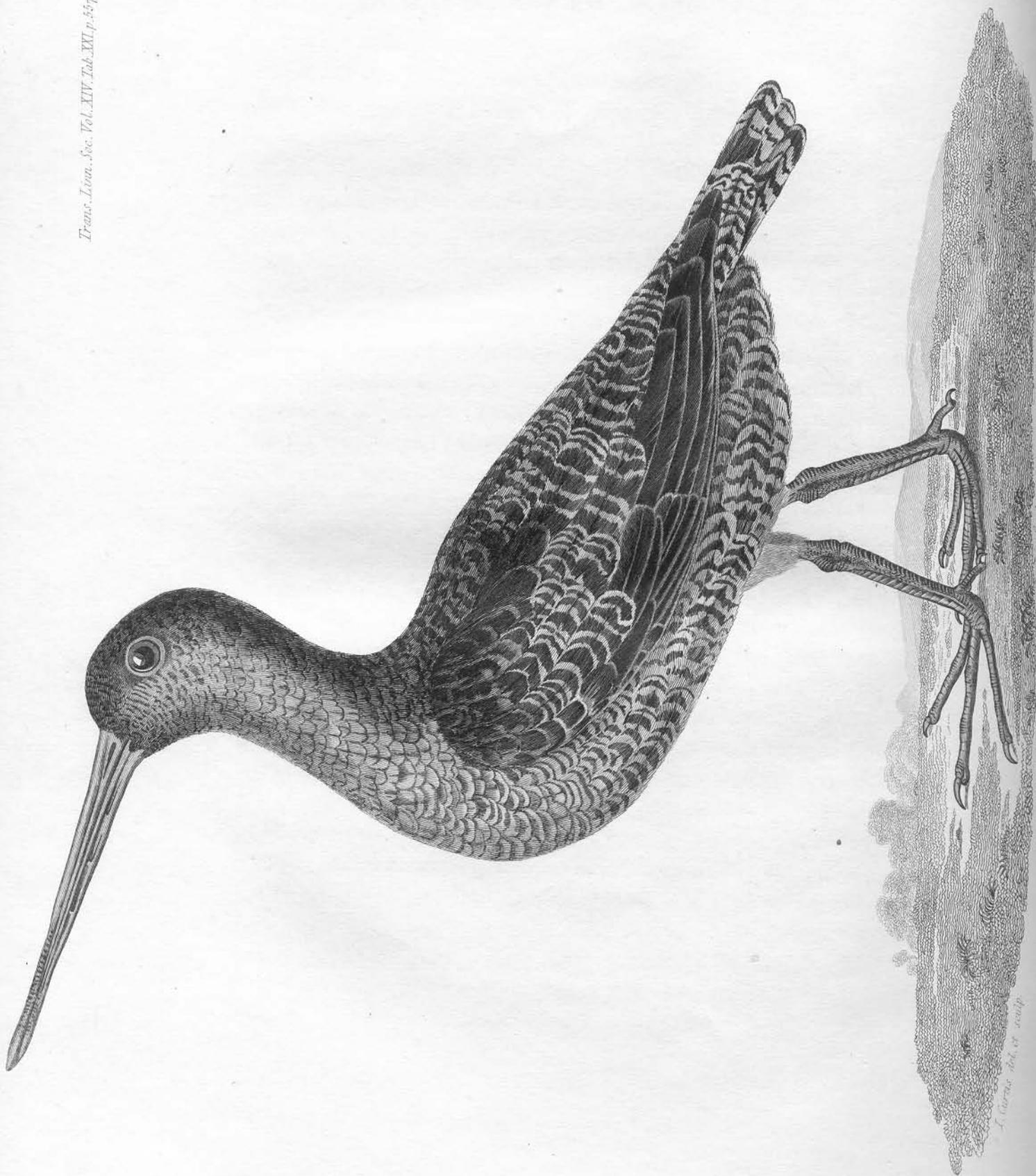


XXVI. *A Description of a new Species of Scolopax lately discovered in the British Islands: with Observations on the Anas glocitans of Pallas, and a Description of the Female of that Species. By N. A. Vigors, Esq. A.M. F.L.S. Communicated by the Zoological Club of the Linnean Society.*

Read November 2, 1824.

THE Natural History of these islands has been studied with so much science and assiduity, and the investigation attended with so much success, that any addition to the number of our species, more particularly in the higher classes of the Vertebrated Animals, must be of rare occurrence, and productive of considerable interest. It is therefore with much pleasure that I submit to this Society the following description of a species of *Scolopax*, new to the Ornithology of the British Islands; and of a species of the Linnean genus *Anas*, which, from its having been until recently but once only observed in this country, and from the specimen which was described not being at present in existence, or capable of being referred to, has been for some time considered as possessing but a doubtful claim to a place in the British Fauna.

Ordo.



J. Goussier del. et sculp.

Ardeola subura

Ordo. GRALLATORES. III.

Fam. SCOLOPACIDÆ, mihi.

Genus. SCOLOPAX Auct.

SCOLOPAX SABINI.

S. castaneo atroque varia, subtus pallidior, pileo humeris pteromatibus remigibusque atris, rostro pedibusque fusco-atris.

TAB. XXI.

Rostrum fusco-atrum, mandibulâ superiore ad basin subcastaneâ. Gula, genæ, pectusque fusco-atræ, castaneo-maculatæ. Abdomen fusco-atrum castaneo-fasciatum. Tectrices inferiores, remigesque subtus fuscæ. Dorsum scapularesque intensè atræ castaneo-fasciatæ. Rectrices duodecim, ad basin atræ, ad apicem ferrugineæ atro-fasciatæ.

Longitudo corporis, rostro incluso, $9\frac{3}{10}$; rostri $2\frac{7}{10}$; alæ a carpo ad remigem secundam $5\frac{1}{10}$; tarsi $1\frac{1}{4}$.

In Mus. nost.

This species is at once distinguished from every other European species of *Scolopax*, by the total absence of white from its plumage, or any of those lighter tints of ferruginous-yellow, which extend more or less in stripes along the head and back of them all. In this respect it exhibits a strong resemblance to the *S. saturata* of Dr. Horsfield, from which however it sufficiently differs in its general proportions: and I find no description of any other extra European species of true *Scolopax* which at all approaches it in this character of its plumage. In the number of the tail-feathers again, which amount to twelve, it differs from *S. major*, which has sixteen, and *S. gallinago*, which has fourteen: it agrees however in this point with *S. gallinula*, which

also has but twelve; but it never can be confounded with that bird, from the great disproportion between the essential characters of both; the bill alone of *S. Sabini* exceeding that of the latter species by one third of its length. In the relative length and strength of the *tarsi* it equally differs from all. These members, although stouter than those of *S. gallinago*, fall short of them by $\frac{3}{20}$ of an inch: they are much weaker, on the other hand, than those of *S. major*, although they nearly equal them in length. In general appearance it bears a greater resemblance to *S. rusticola* than to the other European *Scolopaces*, but it may immediately be recognised as belonging to a different station in the genus; the two exterior toes being united at the base for a short distance, as in the greater number of the congeneric species; while those of *S. rusticola* are divided to the origin.

The only specimen of this species with which I am acquainted, the description of which is accompanied by a very accurate drawing by Mr. Curtis, is the bird in my possession. It was shot in the Queen's County, in Ireland, by the Rev. Charles Doyne, of Portarlinton, in that county, on the 21st of August 1822; and was obligingly communicated to me the same day. I have named the species in honour of the Chairman of the Zoological Club of the Linnean Society, whose zeal and ability have thrown so much light upon the Ornithology of the British Islands*.

* Since the above communication was read to the Society, I have been enabled to record a second instance of this bird having been met with in the British Islands. On the 26th of October 1824, a female of this species was shot on the banks of the Medway, near Rochester, and is preserved in the valuable collection of Mr. Dunning of Maidstone. The specimen was kindly communicated to me by that gentleman, and was exhibited to the Zoological Club on the 23rd of November 1824. It accords in every particular with the specimen above described, with the exception of being somewhat smaller. This difference of size most probably indicates the difference of sex.

Ordo. NATATORES, Ill

Fam. ANATIDÆ, Leach.

Genus. QUERQUEDULA, Briss.

QUERQUEDULA GLOCITANS.

Q. fusca nigro-undata, capite viridi supra nigro subcristato ; maculâ ante poneque oculos ferrugineâ, pectore ferrugineo maculis nigris, tectricibus duabus mediis lateralibus longioribus.

Anas glocitans. Pallas, *Acta Stock.* 1779. xl. t. 33. f. 1.

————— Gmel. *Syst.* i. p. 526.

————— Lath. *Ind. Orn.* p. 862.

Bimaculated Duck. Pennant, *Brit. Zool.* vol. ii. p. 602. t. 100. f. 2. ed. 1776.

MAS. *Rostrum* plumbeum, dextro nigro. *Pileus* niger ferrugineo-variis. *Genæ collique latera* virides. *Guttur* viridigrum. *Pectus abdomenque* medium ferruginea, maculis nigris, superioribus rotundis, inferioribus ovalibus. *Dorsum abdominisque latera* fusca lineis nigris gracilibus undata. *Scapulares* nigro-undatæ, ad apicem nigræ. *Ptila*, *ptero-mataque superiora* fusca, his fasciâ latâ ferrugineâ apicali marginatis ; inferiora alba. *Remiges* fuscæ ; speculo violaceo-viridi, fasciâ mediâ nigrâ, apicali albâ. *Uropygium, caudæque tectrices* viridi-nigræ. *Rectrices* fuscæ, albido-marginatæ, duabus mediis nigris, laterales longitudine excedentibus. *Pedes* lutei, membrano in medio nigro.

Longitudo *corporis*, rostro incluso, $15\frac{3}{4}$; *rostri* ad frontem $1\frac{9}{10}$, ad rictum $2\frac{1}{10}$; *alæ* a carpo ad remigem secundam $8\frac{2}{5}$; *tarsi* $1\frac{1}{2}$.

FEM. *Rostrum* plumbeum dextro fusco. *Caput gutturque* albidè

bidè ferruginea, isto nigro-lineato, hoc parcè nigro-sparso. *Pectus, dorsum, uropygium, abdominisque latera fusca ferrugineo-marginata. Abdomen subtus album. Rectrices mediæ fuscæ, lateralibus haud longiores. Alæ, pedesque ut in mare.*

Longitudo corporis, rostro incluso, $15\frac{1}{2}$; rostri ad frontem $1\frac{7}{10}$, ad rictum 2; alæ a carpo ad remigem secundam $8\frac{1}{5}$; tarsi $1\frac{9}{10}$.
In Mus. nost.

The male of this species was first described by Mr. Pennant in his "*British Zoology*," under the name of *Bimaculated Duck*, and introduced as an inhabitant of the British Islands in the following words:—"Taken in a decoy in 1771, and communicated to me by — Poore, Esq.*" The same bird was afterwards described and figured by Dr. Pallas in the "*Acta Stockholmiensia*" for 1779 as a native of Siberia, frequenting Lake Baikal and the River Lena; and was named by him *Anas glocitans*. On the authority of Mr. Pennant† the species has subsequently been included among the Birds of Great Britain by writers on British Ornithology; but no further account has reached us of the specimen alluded to by that distinguished naturalist, nor has it been ascertained whether it was preserved after it was communicated to him. The specimens of both male and female, from which I

* Vol. ii. p. 603.

† I take Mr. Pennant's authority (see *Arctic Zoology*, p. 575.) for determining that his *Bimaculated Duck* and the *Anas glocitans* of Dr. Pallas are the same species. From the figure given in the "*Acta Stockholmiensia*," I could scarcely myself draw that conclusion; the round spots on the side of the head in the former species being superseded by long narrow stripes in the figure of the latter; while the tail is completely rounded, the two middle feathers not being longer than the rest. Mr. Pennant's own figure of this bird is an excellent representation. I must here notice what appears to be a slight difference between our two birds. In the *British Zoology* the species is described as having twelve tail-feathers: in my specimens, both of male and female, there are sixteen.

have

have taken the above description, were sent up from a decoy near Maldon in Essex, to Leadenhall-market, in the winter of 1812-13. Here they were observed by a respectable naturalist*, who immediately purchased them and set them up. From his collection they have subsequently passed into mine. There can be little doubt of the two birds being sexes of the same species. They agree in all the essential particulars that serve to identify the species of this family; their bill, legs, and feet exactly according in structure, and the colouring and markings of the *speculum* on the wings, a distinguishing character among the *Anatidæ*, being precisely the same. We have moreover, in favour of this conclusion, the negative evidence that the other sex of neither of these birds has until now been ascertained; and we have the positive evidence that both these specimens were taken in the same decoy and at the same time.

The *Querquedula glocitans*, or *Bimaculated Duck*, is readily distinguished from every other species of the family by the two ferruginous spots on the cheeks, in conjunction with the form of its tail, in which the two middle feathers somewhat exceed the others in length. The other European species of the *Anatidæ*, whose tails are elongated, are the *Anas glacialis*, *A. boschas*, and the *A. acuta* of Linnæus†. From the former of these it is at once distinguished by strong generic characters; the *A. glacialis*‡, from its lobated *hallux*, its legs being thrown behind the equilibrium of the body, and its consequently superior habits of swimming and diving, being placed at that extreme end of the family which leads off to the true oceanic birds, or typical *Natatores*; while the *Q. glocitans* belongs to those groups, which,

* Mr. George Weighton, of Fountain Place, City-road.

† These are the *Harelda glacialis*, *Anas boschas*, and *Dafila acuta* of Shaw's Zoology.

‡ The *Anas nigra*, Linn. also has the tail somewhat acute; but, equally with *A. glacialis*, stands at a remote extreme of the family from *Q. glocitans*.

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with a free *hallux*, legs placed within the equilibrium of the body, and inferior powers of swimming and none of diving, affect the neighbourhood of fresh waters, feed occasionally on land, and as such form part of the aberrant subdivisions of the Natatorial Order. It is evidently remote from *A. boschas*, of which the middle tail-feathers also appear the longest, but which are invariably curved upwards. While it may also be perceived to hold a different station from *A. acuta*, which, although closely allied to the same group, yet from its long neck and legs is found to stand at that remote end of it where it is connected with the *Anseres*, the next conterminous division of the family. Its nearest affinity among the European species is to the *A. circia*, Gmel., and *A. crecca*, Linn.*

The appearance of this species in the British Islands seems of rare occurrence; two instances only of the kind having been recorded. These most probably are to be attributed to some extraordinary accident or stress of weather.

* The *Querquedula circia* and *Q. crecca* of modern Ornithologists.