

tapering towards the point, the two middle ones plain deep black, the other five, on each side, hoary white, lightest near the tips, deepening into bluish near the bases, where each is crossed on the inner vane with a broad spot of black, and nearer the root with another of ferruginous; primaries, edged with white; bastard wing, black.

"The female is about half an inch shorter, and an inch less in extent; breast, cinereous brown; upper part of the neck, inclining to ash; the spot of changeable gold, green, and carmine, much less, and not so brilliant; tail-coverts, brownish slate; naked orbits, slate colored; in all other respects like the male in color, but less vivid, and more tinged with brown; the eye not so brilliant an orange. In both, the tail has only twelve feathers."

ARTICLE XXX.—*On the Species of Woodpeckers observed in the vicinity of the City of Ottawa.*

GENUS PICUS, (Linn.)

GENERIC CHARACTERS.—Bill stout, straight, angular, and generally wedge-shaped towards the tip; nostrils elliptical or oblong, situated at the base of the bill, and concealed by bristly feathers; legs, short; toes, three or four; claws large, strong, much curved, compressed very acute; wings of moderate length, or long, with the first quill very small, the third, fourth, and fifth longest; tail of twelve feathers, the lateral very small, and the three middle pairs with the shafts strong and large; tongue long, slender, and barbed towards, and at the tip. Generic name Latin, *Picus*, a Woodpecker.

The whole structure of the Woodpecker is admirably adapted to his mode of life. The skull is large and strong, in order to withstand the repeated shocks it receives from the forcible blows the bird deals upon the trees in pursuit of his food. The legs are stout, and the claws strong, sharp, and formed for climbing perpendicular surfaces; the breast bone has a remarkably small keel, to admit of the body being laid close to the tree, and the middle tail feathers are exceedingly strong, in order that by being pressed hard upon the rough bark, they may serve as an additional support. The wings are formed for short flights, from tree to tree, and the tongue is of extraordinary length, forming a long flexible probe or feeler, which can be thrust far into the small holes of the worms and insects, upon which the Woodpeckers feed. The point is like a slender barbed spear, with the spines directed backwards, which when thrust into an unlucky worm is sure to draw him forth from his retreat. It is furnished with a peculiar muscular apparatus, by the aid of which it can be shot out with great rapidity, and as suddenly or gradually withdrawn; and it is further provided with glands which secrete a viscid substance, that glues to its surface, any small insect with which it comes in contact.

Some ornithologists divide the family into several genera, but Audubon states that the groups present characters so undecided that it is better to