

the soft base meets the hard, outer portion, there is a slight constriction. Pigeon-like is a term often used in describing the bill of the Plover, on account of its similarity in form to that of the Pigeon. There is some difference also in the feet. Those of the Plover are three-toed, while the Snipes, with the exception of the Sanderling, have four-toed feet.

Bearing in mind these differences in bill and feet, the one difficulty will be in distinguishing Plover from Snipe, both of which have several representatives among our birds. Short descriptions of the common Snipes were given in the May number of this Magazine.

The five Plovers which are known to visit our shores will be enumerated in this paper. The descriptions will be short, and will contain no more than is sufficient for their identification.

PLOVERS.

The Beetle-head is the largest of our Plovers. Its migration extends far north, for it has been found breeding within the Arctic Circle. In its breeding plumage it is black underneath. This color is assumed in its northern haunts and is rarely seen elsewhere. We see the Beetle-head in its winter plumage, for before it has reached us on its southward journey, the black is again exchanged for lighter hues, which gives it a color beneath almost white.

It is eleven to twelve inches in length, and has a short or imperfect

hind toe, which distinguishes it clearly in all seasons from the Golden Plover.

The American Golden Plover is not quite so large as the Beetle-head. The change of plumage noted as occurring in the Beetle-head, takes place also in the Golden Plover. The bright yellow speckling of the back indicates the source of its name. Its length does not exceed eleven inches. The golden speckles and the absence of the hind toe in this bird, will enable any one to separate it from the Beetle-head with certainty.

The Kildeer is somewhat smaller than the Golden Plover. Its length is from nine to ten inches. It is distinct in its markings, being a dark olive above with a black bar across the crown, and two bands of the same color on neck and breast. The forehead and underparts are white, with the exception of the band on the breast.

This is a noisy bird which, on account of its nocturnal habits and the infrequency of its visits, is not often seen here.

The Piping Plover is not so common as the Ringneck. It is lighter in color and has no web between inner and middle toes, and a very small one between the middle and outer toes.

The black bands, so distinct in the coloring of the Ringneck, are narrow and imperfect.

The Semipalmated Plover, or Ringneck is a still smaller bird; dark above, white below. It has two broad