

the Southern countries in the month of October, and return again in May. It is said that while upon their migrations they travel during the night and rest and feed during the day, resuming their journey again about sunset.

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PICUS AURATUS, (Linn.)—THE GOLDEN-WINGED WOODPECKER OR HIGH-HOLDER.

SPECIFIC CHARACTERS.—*Upper parts greyish, and brownish spotted with black; lower parts whitish, and yellowish spotted with black; a large white spot on the rump; a crescent shaped patch of black on the breast. Length, 12½; width, 16.—Inhabits the United States and British Provinces. The specific name is from the Latin, (Auratus) gilded, or of a golden colour.*

This very beautiful bird is common in the edges of the woods or in those fields which are not much frequented, and where there may be a quantity of old trees lying on the ground, or dead ones still standing. In such places there are generally numbers of ant-hills, to the eggs of which he is particularly partial. His food, however, varies with the season, and, as is the habit of the Red-headed Woodpecker, the young Indian corn, cherries, berries, and other fruit, are freely partaken of when they are ripe, or otherwise suitable to his palate. This bird feeds more on the ground and is more frequently seen perching upon the branches of trees than the other species of Woodpeckers. While boring the holes in the trees for their nests, the male and female work alternately, the one standing by and encouraging the other, and then taking its place. Wilson states that he has seen a hole made by a pair of these birds which penetrated, first five inches straight forward, and then downward more than twice that distance, *through a solid black oak*. The female lays six white eggs, and when the young are hatched they crawl out of the hole and take to the branches of the tree, where they are fed by the parents.

The Golden-wing is a very lively active bird, and may be readily distinguished by the half-moon shaped spot of black on the breast, or the large patch of white on the rump, most conspicuously seen when the bird is on the wing and rising from the ground. It is rather common in Canada. Wilson gives the following account of their habits in confinement:—

“In rambling through the woods one day, I happened to shoot one of these birds, and wounded him slightly in the wing. Finding him in full feather, seemingly but little hurt, I took him home, and put him into a large cage, made of willows, intending to keep him in my own room, that we might become better acquainted. As soon as he found himself enclosed on all sides, he lost no time in idle fluttering, but throwing himself against the bars of the cage, began instantly to demolish the willows, battering them with great vehemence, and uttering a loud, piteous kind of cackling, similar to that of a hen when she is alarmed and takes to wing. Poor Baron Trenck never labored with more eager diligence at the walls of his prison, than this