

as a lining. The eggs are generally three, rarely four, in number; they are of a broad oval shape, the ground-colour varying from a greyish- or buffish-white to a pale buff, stone-colour, or brown; the markings are of small size and evenly distributed over the shell, consisting of spots and blotches of dark brown or olive-brown, with very prominent underlying grey¹⁰.

HYDROPROGNE.

Hydroprogne, Kaup, Natürl. Syst. p. 91 (1829); Saunders, Cat. Birds Brit. Mus. xxv. p. 32 (1896).

The single species of the genus *Hydroprogne* is a bird of large dimensions, with a red bill of exceptional size, stoutness, and depth. Tail very short, being less than one-third of the wing; the outer tail-feathers are the longest and are pointed. Tarsus short, being less than the length of the middle toe and claw. *H. caspia* is found in nearly all temperate and tropical regions.

1. *Hydroprogne caspia*.

Sterna caspia, Pall. N. Comm. Petrop. xiv. 1, p. 582, t. 22. fig. 2¹; Baird, Brewer, & Ridgway, Water-Birds N. Amer. ii. p. 280².

Hydroprogne caspia, Saunders, Cat. Birds Brit. Mus. xxv. p. 32³; Oates, Cat. Eggs Brit. Mus. i. p. 178⁴.

Sterna tschegrava, A. O. U. Check-l. N. Amer. Birds, p. 23⁵.

Ptil. æstiv. Maxima: supra delicate margaritaceo-cinerea; rectricibus dorso concoloribus, intus et ad apicem albis; alis dorso concoloribus, secundariis intus albidioribus, primariis saturatioribus, intus vix nigricantibus, juxta rhachidem albam et pogonio externo schistaceis; pileo nuchaque cum loris dimidiatis et plumis subocularibus virescenti-nigerrimis; macula suboculari alba; loris inferioribus, facie laterali et corpore subtus toto pure albis: rostro miniato, interdum apicem versus corneo; pedibus nigris; iride saturate brunnea. Long. tota circa 20·0, alæ 17·2, caudæ 4·2, rectrice extima 5·7, culm. 2·9, tarsi 1·6. (Descr. maris adulti ex Corpus Christi. Mus. nostr.)

Ptil. hiem. Ptilosi æstivæ similis, sed pileo nigro, albo maculato et linealiter striato. Long. tota circa 21·0, alæ 16·0. (Descr. maris adulti ex Presidio. Mus. nostr.)

Hab. NORTH AMERICA, from a little beyond the Arctic Circle, breeding southward to Virginia, Lake Michigan, Texas, Nevada, and California^{3 5}.—MEXICO, Mazatlan, Presidio (*Forrer*³).—EUROPE from about 60° N. lat. southwards; ASIA to China³; MALAYASIA to Australia and New Zealand³; AFRICA³.

In Central America this bird can be scarcely more than a winter visitor, two specimens only having been procured near Mazatlan by Mr. Forrer, one in December and another in February³.

It is chiefly an inhabitant of the sea-shores and adjacent islands, but is also found on inland seas and lakes. Its eggs, laid in a depression of the sand, are similar to those of the Gull-billed Tern, but larger⁴.