

and other swimming birds; and, if they are not quick in diving, seizes them, and rises with them from the water. I have seen this hawk come at the report of a gun, and carry off a teal, not thirty steps distant from the sportsman who had killed it, with a daring assurance as surprising as unexpected. This conduct has been observed by many individuals, and is a characteristic trait of the species. The largest bird that I have seen this hawk attack and grapple with on the wing is the Mallard.

"The Great-footed Hawk does not, however, content himself with waterfowl. He is generally seen following the flocks of pigeons, and even blackbirds, causing great terror in their ranks, and forcing them to perform aerial evolutions to escape the grasp of his dreaded talons. For several days, I watched one of them that had taken a particular fancy to some tame pigeons, to secure which it went so far as to enter their house at one of the holes, seize a bird, and issue by another hole in an instant, causing such terror among the rest as to render me fearful that they would abandon the place. However, I fortunately shot the depredator.

"They occasionally feed on dead fish, that have floated to the shores or sand-bars. I saw several of them thus occupied, while descending the Mississippi on a journey undertaken expressly for the purpose of observing and procuring different specimens of birds, and which lasted four months, as I followed the windings of that great river, floating down it only a few miles daily. During that period, I and my companion counted upwards of fifty of these hawks, and killed several; one of which was found to contain in its stomach bones of birds, a few downy feathers, the gizzard of a teal, and the eyes and many scales of a fish.

"Whilst in quest of food, the Great-footed Hawk will frequently alight on the highest dead branch of a tree, in the immediate neighborhood of such wet or marshy ground as the common snipe resorts to by preference. His head is seen moving in short starts, as if he were counting every little space below; and, while so engaged, the moment he espies a snipe, down he darts like an arrow, making a rustling noise with his wings, that may be heard several hundred yards off, seizes the snipe, and flies away to some near wood to devour it.

"It is a cleanly bird, in respect to feeding. No sooner is the prey dead, than the Falcon turns it belly upwards, and begins to