

age, and is the terror of the water-fowl, which constitute the greater portion of its prey. The breeding season of this species is very early. It commences building the nest usually on an inaccessible cliff, by the first of April. This is constructed of twigs, grasses, and sometimes seaweeds. The eggs are from two to four in number: their form is almost spherical, and their color is of a reddish-brown, covered with numerous minute spots and blotches of a darker shade. The dimensions of the only two specimens accessible to me at present are 1.90 inch in length by 1.75 in breadth, and 1.85 inch in length by 1.72 inch in breadth.

The following extracts from the writings of different authors comprise the most interesting observations made of this species:—

“The flight of this bird is of astonishing rapidity. It is scarcely ever seen sailing, unless after being disappointed in its attempt to secure the prey which it had been pursuing; and even at such times it merely rises, with a broad spiral circuit, to attain a sufficient elevation to enable it to reconnoitre a certain space below. It then emits a cry much resembling that of the sparrow-hawk, but greatly louder, like that of the European kestrel, and flies off swiftly in quest of plunder. The search is often performed with a flight resembling that of the tame pigeon, until, perceiving an object, it redoubles its flappings, and pursues the fugitive with a rapidity scarcely to be conceived. Its turnings, windings, and cuttings through the air, are now surprising. It follows and nears the timorous quarry at every turn and back-cutting which the latter attempts. Arrived within a few feet of the prey, the Falcon is seen protruding his powerful legs and talons to their full stretch. His wings are, for a moment, almost closed; the next instant, he grapples the prize, which, if too weighty to be carried off directly, he forces obliquely toward the ground, sometimes a hundred yards from where it was seized, to kill it, and devour it on the spot. Should this happen over a large extent of water, the Falcon drops his prey, and sets off in quest of another. On the contrary, should it not prove too heavy, the exulting bird carries it off to a sequestered and secure place. He pursues the smaller ducks, water-hens,

and other
seizes them
hawk com
steps dista
assurance
observed b
species. T
grapple wi

“The C
with water
pigeons, an
and foreign
of his drea
that had t
which it w
seize a bir
terror am
abandon th

“They
shores or
descending
the purpos
birds, and
of that gre
that period
hawks, and
stomach bo
and the eye

“Whilst
alight on th
borhood of
to by prefer
were count
moment he
rustling no
yards off, s
devour it.

“It is a
prey dead,