

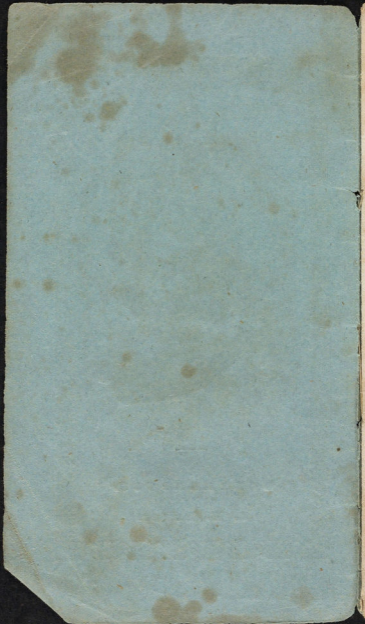
N. S. Pough

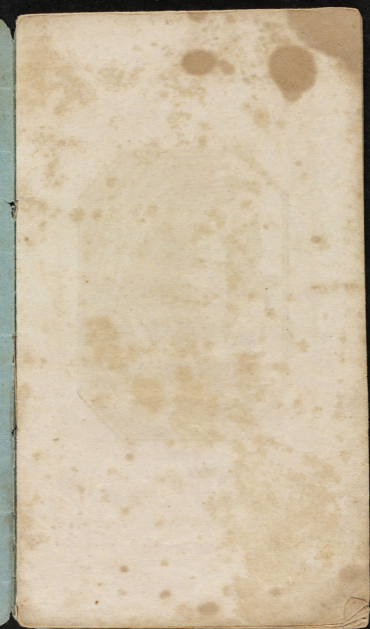
HISTORY OF BIRDS.



NORTHAMPTON.

J. H. Butler.







NATURAL HISTORY

OF

BIRDS.



NORTHAMPTON.

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NATURAL HISTORY.

EAGLE.



SUPREME o'er all the feather'd race,
The soaring Eagle claims a place ;
Majestic, fierce, he wings his way,
Amidst the brightest blaze of day.

There are many kinds of this formidable bird ; and he is considered among the feathered tribe, what the lion is among beasts, the king. They are all alike ferocious, similar in form, though of divers colors, and remarkable for living long, some as

much as a hundred years. From the point of the bill to the tail they measure three feet and upwards; from wing to wing extended, eight feet, and sometimes more. They possess remarkably keen penetrating eyes, which shine with extraordinary lustre. In mountainous and thinly peopled countries they are mostly found, and breed upon the highest cliffs, at the greatest distance from man. The eagle soars higher in the air than any other of the feathered tribe: the strength of his wing is so great, that he will carry off hares, kids, geese, lambs; and even infants, when left unattended, have fallen a prey to his rapacity.



VULTURE.



THE Vulture next the eagle reigns,
 The terror of the skies and plains;
 For not content on birds to prey,
 He bears the tender lamb away.

The Vulture is but little less than the eagle, and is said to have so nice a smell as to distinguish that of dead carcasses at a very great distance. It was formerly thought to abstain from the slaughter of all living animals; but it is now affirmed that it also makes living birds, fawns, hares, kids, and lambs, its prey. His beak is large, and crooked only at the end; his neck is generally bare, for under the head there is a space of near a hand's breadth clothed with

hair, which has a greater resemblance to that of a calf than to feathers; and all the inside of the wings is covered with a soft down. The craw hangs down before the breast like a bag; and, which is contrary to all other birds of prey, the male is not exceeded by the female in bigness.



H A W K.



THE Hawk, likewise a bird of prey,
 Will kill and bear your fowls away ;
 And as such foes you cannot shun,
 Just cock your eye—and cock your gun,

The Hawk is a very rapacious bird ; he seizes not only on partridges, and pheasants, but also the larger fowl, as wild geese and cranes, and will sometimes fly at hares, rabbits, and kids. In France they have been taught to fly at wolves and wild boars, to perch on their heads, to stand firm while they run with all their swiftness, and during their

flight, to pick out their eyes, and make them an easy prey to the huntsmen.

C R A N E.



The Crane is a very pretty bird, and is as tall as a boy 12 years old. It has long and handsome legs and neck, and the curled feathers that you see in the picture, on its back, grow out of the ends of its wings. These feathers the cranes can straighten out if they please, but they almost always let them hang

over and cover the tail. They live in Arabia and Egypt, countries where it is warmer than it is here; and go in great flocks to fields and marshes, and watery places, where they feed upon insects, and snakes, and sometimes fish. They fly, a great many of them together, from one country to another; and sometimes in the night they will all fly down into a field of grain, and tread it down as much as a whole regiment of soldiers would.



OSTRICH.



The Ostrich is a very large bird, being sometimes taller than a man. It has a very long and slender neck, and long legs, with only two toes on each foot. It can run as fast as a race-horse, and never flies. The Ostriches live among the sandy and hot deserts of Arabia and Africa, and eat stones, and hair, and any thing they can get. They are seen in large flocks, and at a distance look like a regiment of soldiers on horse-back. Ostriches are frequently carried about the country in caravans,

as they are called, and almost all children have a chance to see them ; but they should be careful and not plague them, or they will get hurt.

S W A N.



THE Swan with whom no bird can vie,
 For softness and for majesty,
 With crest erect, and stately pride,
 On silver streams delights to glide.

The Swan is a large, beautiful, and stately fowl ; its whole body is covered with white, soft, and delicate plumage, which in old age changes to gray. Its neck is long,

its breast full and swelling, and it carries its head as it moves in the water, in a very graceful manner; its black webbed feet serving it for oars or paddles to repel the water and convey itself from one place to another. It feeds either upon herbs growing in the water, or on worms and insects; and when tame, will come close to the shore to receive whatever is thrown to it; but it never feeds on fish. It is said to live to a very great age.



PENGUIN.



This bird is about as large as a goose, and, like the ostrich, it cannot fly, though it has wings. Its legs are so far behind that you see it has to stand upright like a man. It cannot run, because its legs are so short; but it can swim faster than any other bird. Its wings look like the fins of fishes, and it uses them to swim with. The Penguins keep together in great flocks, on islands and about the water, and live upon fish. When they are seen a great way off,

in flocks, they look very much like a number of children, dressed in black, with white aprons on. When the penguins are on the land, it is very easy to catch them, because they can neither fly nor run. The people go up to them and knock them down with sticks. But in the water they will not let any body come near them. When they see folks trying to shoot them, they dive down and come up a great way off.



PEACOCK.



This is a beautiful bird, and has very rich colored feathers. Its tail or train is longer than its body. This train the Peacock can spread, and make it look very much like a fan. When the peacock is pleased, and feels proud, he spreads his train, and struts about like a soldier. We read in the bible that King Solomon was so fond of peacocks that he used to send to Asia for them. But with all its beauty the peacock is nothing but outside show. He is very greedy

and ill-natured, and his voice, which is a kind of scream, is very unpleasant. He will get into gardens and eat up and destroy plants and seeds, and do a great deal of mischief.

ROBIN.



The Robin Red-breast is a harmless and familiar bird; it flies into houses in winter, and hops about to seek for crumbs. It is familiar with men, and on this account too well known to need a particular description. It is a fine singer, and the breast of the cock is of a deeper red than that of the hen.

P A R R O T.



The Parrot is the only bird that moves the upper bill. It imitates the voice and language of men with more exactness than any other bird, and equally excels them in point of memory. Its feet are formed in a very singular manner; for instead of having three claws before and one behind, it has two each way; in this it differs from all other birds but the woodpecker. There are several sorts of parrots, all which are produced only in warm countries.

L A R K.



Of all the feathered songsters, none convey more pleasure to the human mind than the lark ; to hear him blithly usher in the jocund morn, with his tuneful note, creates the most pleasing sensations. To enjoy the extent of his musical charms, it is necessary to leave him in his native sphere, and perfectly at liberty ; while soaring aloft he raises his enrapturing notes, which continue to be heard when the songster can no longer be seen. The color is almost unchangeably a dappled grey.

PARTRIDGE.



The Partridge has a great affection for her young, and employs at times much stratagem to ensure their safety from those who pursue them. They resemble most of the poultry kind in their habits, but being subject to continual aggression, are, from necessity, more cunning and artful to evade their enemies, and seem possessed of a superior instinct. They are found in every quarter of the globe, and in colder climates are brown in summer, and become white in winter, having a soft warm down beneath their feathers.

G O L D F I N C H .



The Goldfinch is a beautiful bird, and is as well admired for the brightness of its colors as for the sweetness of its notes. It is so mild and gentle that it is no sooner caught than it cheerfully falls to its meat and drink ; it neither beats itself against its cage nor seems frightened at the presence of man. They commonly breed either in apple-trees, or in plumb-trees, having young thrice a year.

THRUSH.



WHEN Spring advances fresh and gay,
 And lambkins leave their dams to play,
 The Thrush and Blackbird both unite,
 To charm the ear and please the sight.

The Thrush is of a dusky brown color on the body and wings; the speckled feathers on its throat are a mixture of brown and yellow. It is generally accounted one of the sweetest and most melodious songsters of the grove; perched on some lofty

tree, it pours forth its enchanting strain for a long continuance; and generally builds its nest in a bush or the hedge. Of the thrush there are many different species.



