

## JACKDAW.

*Corvus monedula*, Linn.

Le Choucas.

THE Jackdaw, still more bold and familiar than the Rook, which approaches so near the residence of man during the period of incubation, advances under the very roofs of our dwellings, as if to solicit for itself and its sooty progeny some especial care and protection; it also lives in towers, old castles, and deserted ruins, the loneliness of which it enlivens with its noisy animated actions and gregarious habits.

Its range of habitat, although not equal to that of the Raven, is nevertheless widely extended, the bird being dispersed over every part of Europe, and the contiguous portions of Asia and Africa.

During the seasons of autumn and winter, the Jackdaw associates with the Rook, in whose society it appears to dwell in amity, feeding with it by day and retiring with it at night to the rookery or the accustomed roosting-place. On the approach of spring it separates from the Rook, and again bends its way towards its favourite place of incubation. Independently of the situations alluded to, it nestles in rocks and the holes of trees, and in some instances in rabbit-holes in the ground. The nest is composed of sticks and lined with wool: the eggs are four or six in number, of a pale greenish blue spotted all over with blackish brown.

Omnivorous in its appetite, the Jackdaw feeds on fruits, pulse, and grain, to which are added, grubs, snails, worms, and even carrion. In its disposition it is thievish and mischievous: easily domesticated and familiar, it may be taught to articulate words with distinctness.

The sexes are alike in the colouring of their plumage, and do not undergo any change either in winter or summer.

The young during the first year are more uniform in their colouring than the adult: the silvery grey of the head and neck is not attained until the bird is three or four years old.

The adult has the top of the head black, with violet reflections; back part of the head and neck silvery grey, the feathers of these parts being long and silky; the whole of the upper surface greyish black, the primaries and secondaries having blue and violet reflections; feet and bill black; irides greyish white.

The Plate represents an adult male and female of the natural size.