

## CARRION CROW.

*Corvus Corone, Linn.*

La Corneille noir.

WE are induced to believe that the range of habitat of this well-known species is not so extensive as is generally supposed, but that most of the birds received from distant countries, although very similar, are specifically distinct not only from the Carrion Crow of Europe but also from each other, and that although these differences are not apparent to the casual observer, they will be found on a critical examination to be sufficiently important.

The Carrion Crow is very generally distributed over the British Islands, where it is a permanent resident; it also appears to be equally dispersed over the western portion of the European continent, but is rarely found so far east as Hungary and many parts of Austria. In its habits, manners, and general economy the Carrion Crow is nearly allied to the Raven; like that bird it wanders about in pairs, evincing the greatest wariness of disposition and shyness on the approach of man, which may, however, be partly attributed to the persecution it meets with from almost every one. The Crow is a more powerful and robust bird than the Rook, from which it may readily be distinguished by the greenish metallic hue of its plumage, and by its thickened and more arched bill, which is never deprived of the bristly feathers that cover the face and nostrils. It is also clearly destined by nature to fulfill a very different office; for, while Rooks congregate in immense flocks and disperse themselves over cultivated districts in search of insects, grubs, and grain, the Crow, as before observed, wanders about in solitary pairs, or at most in parties of six or eight, in search of all kinds of carrion, upon which it feeds voraciously; and hence it may be frequently observed on the banks of the larger rivers, which constantly afford it a supply of putrid animal matter; to this kind of food are occasionally added eggs, the young of all kinds of game, and it is even so daring when pressed by hunger as to attack very young lambs, fawns, &c. When once mated, it would appear that Crows never again separate, and if unmolested in their chosen breeding-place, the same pair generally return every year not only to the same locality but to the same tree. The nest is usually placed in a fork near the bole, is of a smaller size than that of the Rook, and is constructed of sticks and mud, lined with wool and hair. The eggs are five or six in number, of a greenish ground, blotched all over with thickly set patches of ash-coloured brown.

It is perhaps one of the most destructive birds the preserver of game has to contend with, and in consequence the poor Crow being sadly persecuted uses the utmost vigilance and cunning to evade the pursuit of his great enemy the gamekeeper.

The sexes offer no difference in the colour of the plumage, and they assume the full colouring from the nest.

The whole of the plumage is black, the upper surface being glossed with blue and greenish reflexions; bill, legs, and feet black, the scales on the two latter being in laminae, or plates.

The figure is of the natural size.