

Genus FREGILUS.

GEN. CHAR. *Bill* longer than the head, strong, arched and pointed. *Nostrils* basal, oval, hidden by small closely set feathers. *Head* flat. *Wings* long, first quill-feather short, fourth and fifth the longest. *Tail* square, or slightly rounded. *Feet* strong. *Toes* four, three before, one behind, the outer toe united at its base to the middle one. *Claws* strong, very much curved, that of the hind-toe the largest.

CHOUGH.

Fregilus graculus, *Cuvier*.

Le Pyrrhocorax coracias.

THE Chough is readily distinguished from the true Crows by the peculiar form of the beak: its habits and œconomy, as might be expected, are also somewhat different. In this country the Chough is found on the rocky coasts of Cornwall, Devonshire and Glamorganshire, at the Isle of Anglesea, and the Isle of Man. A few pairs may be seen about the high cliffs between Freshwater-gate and the Needle rocks of the Isle of Wight. In the North, they frequent the high and rocky coast about St. Abb's Head, and most of the islands of Scotland, where they breed at high elevations. The Swiss Alps and rocky portions of the most lofty mountains of the European continent, as well as the Himalaya, are among its favourite localities.

In such elevated situations, the strong toes and large curved claws of this bird are of essential service, in securing for it a firm hold against the rugged and perpendicular surface of the highest cliffs, among the inequalities of which it forms a nest of sticks lined with wool and hair, in which it deposits three or four eggs, not very unlike those of the Jackdaw, but longer, of a greenish white ground spotted with darker green and ash-brown. These birds are also said to build about the upper parts of high churches and towers near the coast. Their food consists of insects principally, with grain and berries.

The Chough is lively, restless, noisy and cunning, easily attracted by showy or glittering substances; is tamed without difficulty if taken young, and exhibits under confinement a variety of amusing tricks and actions.

The whole plumage is black, glossed with purple, green, and dark blue; the irides hazel; beak and legs vermilion red; claws black. Young birds of the year have their plumage dull black, with a bill less brilliant.

We have figured an adult male rather less than the natural size: the females are rather smaller.