

PALLID HARRIER.

Circus pallidus, Sykes.

For the knowledge of the occurrence of this species of Harrier in Europe we are indebted to M. Temminck, who has transmitted for our use a fine male, which he states was killed on the banks of the Rhine. This bird, the *Circus pallidus* of Colonel Sykes, is abundantly dispersed over a great portion of India, but up to the year 1832 remained uncharacterized, in consequence of its having been considered as identical with the *Circus cyaneus*. The differences, however, which exist between those closely allied species were then clearly pointed out by Colonel Sykes in his Catalogue of the Birds of the Dukhun; and as these differences have been well defined by that gentleman in the Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London for April 1832, we prefer to make use of his own words: "This bird has usually been considered the *Circ. cyaneus* of Europe; but it differs in the shade of its plumage (male and female); in the back-head of the male not being white spotted with pale brown; in the absence of dusky streaks on the breast; in the rump and upper tail-coverts being white barred with brown ash; in the inner webs of four of the tail-feathers not being white; and in the bars of the under tail being seven instead of four. The female resembles the female of *Circ. cyaneus*, but the plumage is two shades lighter, the tail is barred with six broad fuscous bars instead of four, and the tail-feathers are much more pointed. The remains of six lizards were found in the stomach of one bird. I never saw these birds perch on trees. They frequent the open stony plains only. The sexes were never seen together." To this we may add that we have compared the specimen sent to us by M. Temminck with others from India, that not the slightest difference exists between them, and that the barred upper tail-coverts and paler colouring of this species will readily distinguish it from the *Circ. cyaneus*.

Since the above was written we have seen as many as eight or ten specimens in one collection, the whole of which were killed in Spain, from which we are led to infer that it is there a common species, and that in all probability it also abounds throughout the northern portions of Africa.

Head and all the upper surface pale grey very slightly tinged with brown; upper tail-coverts white, spotted or rather barred with pale brown; quills white at the base passing into deep brown at their extremities, and margined externally with greyish; tail pale grey, the outer feathers becoming nearly white; the whole crossed with six fuscous bars, which are most conspicuous on the outer feathers, where they assume a rufous tint; bill blue; cere and legs yellow; irides greenish yellow.

We have figured the bird of the natural size.