

## BLACK KITE.

Milvus ater.

Le Milan noir ou parasite.

THIS species, which may at all times be distinguished from the Common Kite of England (*Milvus vulgaris*, Flem.) by the darker colour of its plumage and by the numerous longitudinal stripes on the head and neck, is dispersed in considerable numbers over the southern portions of Germany, the whole of France, Switzerland, and the European countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. No instance is on record of its having paid a migratory visit to the British Islands; still, judging from its extraordinary powers of flight, and from the wandering habits of the generality of the *Falconidæ*, it is not improbable that it may have penetrated so far west as our island, and have been mistaken for the common species: we throw out this hint in order to induce British ornithologists generally, and particularly those who reside in the southern parts of England, to investigate this subject whenever an opportunity offers.

The range of the Black Kite eastward appears to be very great, as we have seen examples of it in several collections from India, particularly the Himalaya mountains; it is also equally abundant in Northern Africa.

We have observed this species in a state of nature and in confinement both in Germany and France; it bore so strict a resemblance in its manners to the common species, that the addition of a second description is totally unnecessary.

It incubates on trees, and lays three or four yellowish white eggs very thickly spotted with brown.

The sexes are alike in plumage, and the young when a year old resemble the parents.

Bill black; cere, feet, and legs yellow; irides silvery yellow; head and neck longitudinally striped with brown and greyish white; all the upper parts deep brown; under surface reddish brown with a longitudinal stripe of a darker tint down the centre of each feather; primaries blackish brown; tail slightly forked and of a dark grey brown, transversely rayed with darker brown.

The Plate represents an adult bird about two thirds of the natural size.