

### Genus **PERNIS**, *Cuv.*

GEN. CHAR. *Bill* slender, weak, bending gradually from the base to the tip; cutting margin nearly straight; cere occupying half the length of the bill; under mandible sloping gradually to the tip. *Nostrils* long, narrow, placed very obliquely in the cere and opening forwards: lores thickly covered with small soft tiled feathers. *Wings* long and ample; first feather shorter than the sixth, and the third and fourth the longest in the wing; inner webs of the first four notched, and the outer webs of the third, fourth, and fifth sinuated. *Tail* long and slightly rounded. *Legs*, tarsal half feathered, lower or naked part reticulated. *Toes* rather slender, the inner and outer ones of nearly equal length, the anterior joints of all scutellated. *Claws* weak, slightly hooked, with the inner edge of the middle one dilated.

### **HONEY BUZZARD.**

*Pernis apivorus*, *Cuv.*

La Buse Bondrée.

THE Honey Buzzard, which is the type of Cuvier's genus *Pernis*, is much more sparingly diffused over the continent of Europe than the Common Buzzard (*Buteo vulgaris*), from which it differs in possessing a more feeble and softer bill, which is wider in the gape, and in having shorter and less powerful tarsi and toes, the claws of which are straighter and less retractile: it may also be easily distinguished from the members of the genus *Buteo* by the small and closely set feathers which cover the space between the bill and the eye, which space in all the rest of the *Falconidæ* is either bare or thinly covered with fine hairs or bristles.

We have good reason to believe that the Honey Buzzard is far more abundant in the British Islands than is generally suspected, several instances having come to our knowledge, not only of its capture, but also of its breeding in this country. Its flight is easy and graceful, and, like its near ally the *Buteo vulgaris*, its great size readily attracts the notice of the keeper and sportsman, to whom it soon becomes a prey when it takes up its abode in our woods or parks. The range of this bird is not confined to Europe alone, as is proved by our having frequently observed it in collections from India.

Its favourite food appears to be insects, wasps, bees, and their larvæ, to which are added lizards, small birds, mice, and moles.

It is subject to a number of changes in the colouring of its plumage, some individuals being of a uniform dark bronzy brown, while others have the head, neck, and under surface almost white with broad transverse bars of brown: this latter state is considered to characterize the young bird.

It builds in lofty trees, constructing a nest of twigs lined with wool and other soft materials; the eggs are small, of a yellowish white marked with numerous spots of reddish brown.

Crown of the head brown tinged with bluish; upper surface brown of various tints edged with yellowish brown; throat yellowish white with a few brown streaks on the shafts of the feathers; under surface yellowish white, with triangular spots and bars of chestnut; tail dark brown, with three bars of blackish brown; bill bluish black; cere greenish; irides yellow; tarsi and feet yellow; claws black.

There being no difference in the colouring of the sexes, we have figured a bird in the plumage of its first year.