

Genus BUTEO, *Cur.*

Species of the genus *Buteo* are dispersed over the great continents of Europe, Asia, Africa and America, but only one has yet been discovered in Australia.

20. *Buteo melanosternon*, *Gould* Vol. I. Pl. 20.

This bird departs somewhat in form from the typical species of the genus *Buteo*; but so little is known respecting it that we are ignorant how far this departure may influence its habits and economy. One most singular story has been transmitted to me and is here given as I received it; without vouching for its truth, I may remark that the testimony of the natives may generally be relied upon.

“The natives, Mr. Drummond, and his son Mr. Johnson Drummond, tell me,” says Mr. Gilbert, “that this bird is so bold, that upon discovering an Emu sitting on her eggs it will attack her with great ferocity until it succeeds in driving her from them; when it takes up a stone with its feet, and while hovering over the eggs lets the stone fall upon and crush them, and then descends and devours their contents. I have had numerous opportunities of observing the bird myself, and can bear testimony to its great powers of scent or vision; for upon several occasions, when the natives had placed a small kangaroo or kangaroo-rat in the fork of a tree or on the top of a *Xanthorrhœa* with the intention of taking it again on our return, we have found that the bird during our short absence had discovered and devoured every part of it except the skin, which was left so perfect, that at first I could not believe that it had not been done by the hand of man.”

Genus MILVUS, *Cur.*

Asia is the great stronghold of the Kites or restricted genus *Milvus*; a few species occur in Europe, Africa, and the Indian Islands, and two are natives of Australia.

21. *Milvus affinis*, *Gould* Vol. I. Pl. 21.

Milvus (Hydroictinia) affinis, Kaup, Isis, 1847, p. 118.

This representative of the *Milvus ater* of Europe is found all over Australia, even at Port Essington: Captain Sturt observed it flying over the far interior of South Australia in great numbers.

22. *Milvus isurus*, *Gould* Vol. I. Pl. 22.

This species, which is sparingly dispersed over the whole of the southern part of Australia, is an equally beautiful representative of the common Kite, *Milvus regalis* of Europe.

Genus ELANUS, *Sav.*

Species of this well-defined genus inhabit nearly every part of the world: two are natives of Australia.

23. *Elanus axillaris* Vol. I. Pl. 23.

Elanus melanopterus, Vig. & Horsf. in Linn. Trans., vol. xv. p. 185.

The *Elanus axillaris* is a representative of the *Elanus melanopterus* of Europe.

24. *Elanus scriptus*, *Gould* Vol. I. Pl. 24.

A fine new species rendered conspicuously different from all the other members of the genus by the black-lettered form of the markings under the wings.

Captain Sturt found this bird abundant at the Depôt towards the interior of Australia.