height, towards the north. A few days afterwards we noticed several of these birds among the Hills of Benjamin, disporting themselves, and often descending to the ground. They were probably preparing to breed in some of the deep ravines which run down towards the Jordan. From that time, throughout the summer, we rarely lost sight of this noble bird. The Wady Hamam, opening into the plain of Gennesaret, was a favourite resort of large flocks, which bred in the fissures of the stupendous cliffs, hopelessly beyond the reach of the most ardent rock-climber and nester. From their habit of selecting chinks under the overhanging ledges, it was impossible, even with the aid of ropes, to reach their holes; and could they have been attained, the pick and chisel must have been applied indefatigably to reach many of the nests. About daybreak they might be seen dashing in long lines, with lightning speed, down the ravine, and exercising themselves over the plain. At this time in the morning we were able occasionally to secure a specimen; but very soon they began to rise higher and higher, mingled with numbers of two other species, till in the depth of that dark, blue, cloudless sky they were at last lost even to the keenest sight. Towards evening they began to descend, flying lower than either of their associates, sometimes sweeping close to the ground, and dashing past us with bewildering swiftness. The sharp, grating sound of the whirr of their wings struck the ear for a moment; but the eye could scarcely follow them. However, as their flight was always remarkably straight, we were able to secure several specimens as they passed us. The motion of their long sharp wings was scarcely perceptible. Near Safed we found a colony breeding in a much more accessible position, evidently having young, in the middle of May, We obtained several specimens, but had neither time nor appliances to attempt their nests. Once only did we find this Swift breeding near the ground. On the 2nd of May we had climbed to the summit of Mount Gilead, overlooking the deep Jordan valley from the east side, one of the grandest panoramic views in Palestine. After standing for some time on a projecting platform of rock, which forms the western brow of the mountain, we descended to examine the face of the cliff, and discovered three large and partly artificial caves immediately below us. They were a mass of fossilized ammonites; and while hammering at these, in one of the caves out flew two Alpine Swifts, whose nest we soon discovered in a crevice about six feet above the floor of the cavern. The chink, which was about three inches in perpendicular diameter, was contracted by a plastering of very hard mud which cost us some labour to work out. Inside, the cavity enlarged as it descended; and, after scooping away the clay and portions of the rock, I was at length able to touch the two eggs with the tips of my fingers, but was unable to remove them. This was the only instance in which we observed *C. melba* breeding not in large colonies. Their roosting-places are few; but what matters this to a bird that can traverse the whole extent of the Holy Land in an hour? The bird does not appear to resort much to the Hermon or the Lebanon, preferring the far more precipitous though lower cliffs which line the ravines running down to the Ghor. One other nesting-place we noticed, in a spot certainly selected with a view to the picturesque. Just above Ifka (Aphek) where the ground is strewn with the marble shafts of the famed temple of Venus, at Adonis, the classic stream of the Adonis bursts, full-grown at birth, in a prodigious volume, from the foot of a shallow cave under a lofty precipice. Here, on the 18th of June, a colony of Alpine Swifts were busily engaged in feeding their young."

"The scream of this bird is much louder than that of the common Swift, and quite as harsh. It appears less reluctant than the common species to descend to the ground. It was interesting to observe how rapidly the larger bird distances the others when the three species (*C. melba*, *C. apus*, and *C. abyssinicus*) were disporting in mid-air together, and how a few of the giants would wheel and double backwards and forwards, among a somewhat crowded flock of the little *C. abyssinicus*, and yet never part company from them for any distance."—*Ibis*, 1866, p. 77.

Speaking of the Alpine Swift as seen in India, Mr. Jerdon says it is not rare in the south, "all along the range of the Western Ghâts, from Honore to Cape Comorin, extending its daily flights often to the western sea-coast, and occasionally eastwards to Salem, Madura, and even Madras. At times they are very abundant on the Neilgherries, and, during the cold weather, may very generally be seen on the Malabar coast. I discovered one roosting-place of this Swift on the magnificent precipices at the Falls of Gairsoppa. Here, especially on the cliffs on each side of the great fall, above 900 feet of perpendicular height, these Swifts were congregated in vast numbers; and, from some of them remaining about the cliffs at all times of the day, I have little doubt that they bred there. Tickell observed the Alpine Swift in Central India, where he says it is 'common in all the more elevated regions, but flies so high as to escape observation—and that it resorts much to the tops of high rocks or wooded hills, the summits of which it flies round with great velocity. Flocks sometimes assemble of an evening near large ponds in the jungles, dashing into the water with loud screams like our Swift at home.' It has not, to my knowledge, been observed in the eastern Himalayas, but it is said to be common in the hills to the N.W. at all seasons, extending its flight to the Punjaub, Cashmere, &c., during the cold weather."—*Birds of India*, vol. i. p. 175.

There is no difference in the colouring of the sexes, which are figured of the natural size.