

## ARCHIBUTEO LAGOPUS.

### Rough-legged Buzzard.

- Falco lagopus*, Brünn. Orn. Bor., p. 4.  
— *plumipes*, Daud. Traité d'Orn., tom. ii. p. 163.  
*Buteo pennatus*, Daud. Traité d'Orn., tom. ii. p. 156.  
— *lagopus*, Steph. Cont. of Shaw's Gen. Zool., vol. xiii. pt. ii. p. 47.  
*Archibuteo planiceps* et *alticeps*, Brehm, Vög. Deutsch., pp. 40 & 41.  
— *lagopus*, Gray, List of Gen. of Birds, 2nd edit. p. 3.  
*Buteo buteo*, Less. Traité d'Orn., p. 83.  
— *lagopus*, Bonap. Comp. List of Birds of Eur. and N. Amer., p. 3.

DR. BAIRD, in his 'Catalogue of North American Birds,' gives the temperate portions of Europe and America as the habitat of the *Archibuteo lagopus*. If this be the true state of the case, then the bird enjoys a wide range; but Mr. J. H. Gurney, our highest authority with respect to Raptorial birds, considers that it is not found in America, and inclines to the opinion that the American individuals, hitherto supposed to be identical with the European bird, were the young of the allied species *Archibuteo Sancti-Johannis*. I do not find it in Schrenck's 'List of the Birds of the Amoor,' and Mr. Swinhoe did not meet with it in Northern China. Its separation from the genus *Buteo* has mainly been suggested by the feathering of the tarsi, a difference very similar to that seen between the Golden and Sea Eagles. The Common and Rough-legged Buzzards also differ considerably in their habits, particularly in the situations they frequent. The latter is less of a woodland species than the former, and in Norway will be found among the bleak open moorlands, hunting the mountain-sides for hares, lemmings, moles, &c., and, when not on the wing, sitting on a large stone in the middle of the moor, watching the Ptarmigan and Willow-grouse, upon which it makes a stoop when inclined to feed. I have seen it, with its long flapping wings, hunting over the wild uplands of the Dovrefjeld, when its actions, as seen at a distance, so much resembled those of the Harriers, that for a time I mistook it for one of those birds. In England it must be considered an irregular visitant, for its occurrence here is very uncertain; when it does come, it generally makes its appearance in autumn, and takes up its quarters in the great rabbit-warrens of Norfolk and Suffolk, where its lives until it has been trapped or received an unequivocal notice to quit. It not unfrequently happens that as many as thirty or forty appear at a time, and it is on record that even a larger number have been killed in a single season. Most of these wanderers from their native moors are young birds of the year, which have attained their full size, but which are very differently coloured, being marked with longitudinal tawny blotches, while the adults are barred with brown and buffy white, particularly on the lower part of the abdomen and the thighs. With reference to the occurrence of the bird in Norfolk, Mr. Stevenson says, "The Rough-legged Buzzard appears here in autumn and throughout the winter, their numbers varying greatly in different seasons; and though at times very scarce, they have been known to visit us in very considerable numbers. During the months of November, December, and January, 1839-40, no less than forty-seven specimens were obtained within eight miles of Thetford, and many more were killed in other parts of the county. From that time until the autumn of 1858, they were rather scarce; between October and January of the following year about twenty were obtained, chiefly in the neighbourhood of Thetford and Yarmouth. They have also been plentiful during the present winter (1862-63), though not to the extent above alluded to: one bird-stuffer in Norwich has had four or five, and a game-dealer at Yarmouth seven or eight more; they have also, I learn, been procured in Cambridgeshire, Suffolk, and other adjoining counties. Nearly all the specimens obtained on this coast, however, are in immature plumage; indeed I know of but four or five adult birds, with the cross bars on the thigh-feathers, in our local collections."

It must not be supposed that the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk are the only parts of Great Britain in which this bird is found; for examples have been obtained in Yorkshire, Northumberland, and Kent; it has also been found in Scotland and in various parts of Ireland. It is evidently a northern rather than a southern species; for it rarely, if ever, crosses the Mediterranean, and, in our own island, seldom visits the southwestern counties of Devonshire and Cornwall.

Mr. Wheelwright states, in his 'Spring and Summer in Lapland,' "that the Rough-legged Buzzard was by far the commonest of all the birds of prey in the Quickiock district during the summer, probably in consequence of the number of lemmings which swarmed on the fells. They appeared as spring migrants early in May, and the first nest I obtained was on the 21st of that month: it contained three eggs. I have obtained a nest with five, and one with six; but three is the usual number. The nest, a coarse edifice of sticks, moss, and grass, loosely put together, was often on a fell ridge below the snow-region, often in a tree, but never