

little effort, and should he spy a carcase, hovers over it in short curves, until satisfied as to his security should he alight upon it.

“The cry is so shrill, that in calm weather one may hear it at the distance of a mile; and it often emits a kind of clear yelp, which resembles the syllable *klick, klick, klick*, or *queek, queek, queek*, and which seems to be an expression of anger or impatience.” (Macgillivray, ‘British Birds,’ vol. iii. pp. 228, 229.)

“The Sea-Eagle,” says Mr. Wolley, “generally makes its nest in the high cliffs of the coast, but also occasionally breeds inland. In the former situation an eyrie had nothing but a very little heather, grass, and moss used in its construction. Two other nests were made principally of sea-weed, and were in such “tremendous cliffs” that my informant’s hair ‘gets strong’ when he thinks of them. In the Shetlands an inaccessible eyrie was pointed out to me on the top of a stack, or steep detached rock; and I have seen another such stack on the north-east coast of Scotland, which was also said to have an eyrie at its summit. In inland situations, the Sea-Eagle generally establishes itself upon a rock or islet in the middle of a loch. Here it builds, upon the ground or in a tree, a nest whose construction does not differ from that of the Golden Eagle, there being always in it a certain amount of *Luzula sylvatica*. The tree is not always a large one; I have seen two nests of different years in trees on separate islands in one loch, each only about four feet from the ground. I can call to mind nine instances of such island eyries. The old birds do not always calculate the depth of the water, as there is one place at least to which a man can wade. Where swimming is necessary to get at the eggs, it is often an affair of danger, as the birds will do their best to drown the enemy with their wings. In two spots I have seen large Scotch firs, which have been formerly tenanted by Sea-Eagles—one by the side of a loch, the other several miles away from any piece of water, in a sort of open wood of similar trees. The nest had been in a fork where three branches met, 20 feet high, and, as in other cases, the main trunk bore its weight. In one instance the crossed and nearly horizontal trunks of two small trees formed the support. The eggs, two or three in number, are always probably, when first laid, of a spotless white, and afterwards receive as stains the slight colour with which they are marked. They are laid a week or a fortnight later than those of the Golden Eagle, and are generally smaller.” (Hewitson’s ‘Eggs of British Birds,’ 3rd edit. vol. i. p. 15.)

Macgillivray states that toward the middle of spring these Eagles begin to construct their nest, which is of great size, being about 5 feet in diameter, flat, and composed of sticks, twigs, heath, dried sea-weeds, tufts of grass, wool, and other materials, and that “the young make their appearance at the beginning of June, and are then covered with a down of a greyish-white colour. They are plentifully supplied with food, and grow rapidly, but do not leave the nest until the middle of August, when they are enticed abroad by their parents, who continue to supply them with food for many days. When the breeding-season is over, the young disperse; and although these birds are not of social habits, several individuals may often be seen, at no great distance, traversing the hills or shores where there is plunder to be obtained. Their food consists of carrion of every description, stranded fish, young sea-birds, and small quadrupeds, for which they search the moors and pastures. Their sight must be keen; but in looking for prey they do not rise to a vast elevation, as has been alleged, but fly at the height of a few hundred yards, sweeping along the hill-sides with a steady motion, or winding in curves with outspread wings. I have often seen them, far out at sea, hovering and sailing in this manner; and several persons have told me that they sometimes clutch up fishes that happen to come to the surface. They may also occasionally be observed watching on the banks of a river, and attacking the salmon and trout when they come into shallow water. That they fare well is evinced by the abundance of provision which they bring to their young; but their courage and address do not seem to be equal to their powers; for, unless pressed by famine, they scarcely venture to molest an animal larger than a hare. Grouse are sometimes destroyed by it, and instances have been known of its carrying off a domestic fowl that had straggled to a distance from the house; but the Sea-Eagle has more of the Vulture than of the Falcon in its character, and at all times would be well content with mere carrion.”

The adults have the lanceolate feathers clothing the head and neck pale brown, with a narrow line of dark brown down their shafts; all the upper surface dark brown, each feather broadly edged with whitish brown; wings dark brown, with light shafts, and the tertiaries narrowly edged at the tip with light brown; breast mottled light brown and whitish, and with a stripe of dark brown down the shafts; under surface lighter than the upper, and the feathers less conspicuously margined; tail white, stained with brown at the base, the longest coverts also white, mottled with brown at the base, with an irregular crescent of brown at the tip; cere wine-yellow; bill and legs straw-yellow; claws black.

The young birds have the feathers of the head and neck dark brown, with paler tips; upper surface reddish brown, with dark shafts; under surface brown, of different tints, with a few white feathers interspersed; primaries brownish black; tail variegated with hair and clove-brown, deepening towards the tip.

The foremost figure represents a female, about one-third of the natural size.