## Subfamily MILVINÆ.

## Genus Milvus.

The true Kites, or the members of this genus as now restricted, are birds of the Old World, over which they are so generally distributed that, with the exception of New Zealand and Polynesia, one or other of the few species known are to be found in every part of it. Their disposition is less cruel than that of the true Falcons; and they feed principally on garbage; they are consequently useful scavengers, and, moreover, arrant thieves.

KITE or GLEDE.

The common Kite of England, which in Shakspeare's time might probably be hourly seen soaring over the metropolis, is now, thanks to the exterminating hand of man, rarely to be seen in any part of the country. If a solitary pair should occasionally be met with, they should be hailed with reverence as being almost the sole remnant of a departed race—so far as our islands are concerned; for in Central and Eastern Europe, Asia Minor, and North Africa the species still exists. The Kites build large grotesque untidy nests of moss, wool, rags, and rubbish of every description; and when our species was plentiful, it must have kept the housewife on the alert for her frills and furbelows hung out to dry on the village hedge, fully justifying Shakspeare's line:—

"When the Kite builds look to lesser linen."

Inhabits Europe generally, Asia Minor, and North Africa.

BLACK KITE.

I have mentioned above the approximate extermination of the English Kite; and I may now state that, should such unhappily be the ultimate result, it seems likely that its place would be supplied by another species, the *Milvus migrans*, which would seem to show some indication of an intention to come among us, at least in one instance, as will be seen on reference to my plate of the species, which was taken from a specimen killed at Newcastle-on-Tyne

Inhabits Central Europe, Siberia, Palestine, Africa, and Australia, in which latter country it is only an accidental visitor.

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