Subfamily FALCONINÆ.

Genus Falco.

The members of this genus are preeminently bold, courageous, and sanguinary, many of them, especially the Gyr Falcons and Peregrines, not hesitating to attack in the air birds much larger than themselves; and when trained for hawking, as they have been from time immemorial, their courage and daring is so much enhanced that they will engage with birds of even larger size than they do in their wild state. Structurally they are better adapted for a quick and arrow-like flight than any other of the Raptores.

One or other of the numerous species of this group inhabit nearly every portion of the globe. The Gyr Falcon and its immediate allies are almost solely confined to the high northern regions, whence they migrate during autumn and winter towards the equator, but never across it.

The Peregrines are much more generally dispersed than the Gyr Falcons, the various species frequenting most countries both north and south; thus the form exists in Europe, Asia, and Australia, in Africa also from the Atlas range to the Cape of Good Hope, and in America from the latitude of Hudson's Bay to Tierra del Fuego. The smaller Falcons, such as the Hobby and Merlin, are also more or less represented in each country, but generally, although not exclusively, are of different species.

ICELAND FALCON.

The subject of the great northern Falcons will be found so fully treated of in the body of the work that it would be mere tautology to say more here than that this bird is, as its name implies, a native of Iceland, and, but more sparingly, of Greenland. It is also said to be found in Hudson's Bay and other of the extreme northern parts of America. Occasionally adults, but more frequently young birds of the year, wander as far south as the British Islands.

Appears to be darkly coloured from the nest, but never so deep in tint as that of the true Gyr Falcon.