

DIV. I. LAND BIRDS.

ORDER I. RAPACIOUS.

Birds of prey.—Bill and claws very strong and hooked, particularly adapted to the tearing to pieces of their food: body muscular: females largest: they seldom drink, the blood and juices of their prey affording sufficient moisture; as they seldom feed on any animal but what they kill and gorge on directly: eagles lay two eggs, the lesser hawks four, and rarely have more than one nest in the year; the Creator denying a large increase to this destructive race: whereas, on the contrary, those birds that are adapted to the use and necessity of man are very prolific.

GENUS I. FALCON.

Character of the Genus FALCON.

BILL, strong, and hooked at the end; the base covered with a naked skin or cere.
NOSTRILS, at the end of the cere.
TONGUE, large, fleshy, and in some, cleft at the end.
LEGS, very strong and scaly.

SPECIES I. SEA EAGLE. No. 1.

Falco Ossifragus. *Lin. Syst.* I. p. 124. No. 4.
Le Grand Aigle de Mer. *Bris. Orn.* I. p. 437.

This species is found in several parts of Great Britain and Ireland; but, like the rest of these large birds of prey, are not common. The length of this bird is three feet and a half; the expansion of the wings from tip to tip is near eight feet: the bill is of a bluish horn colour; cere yellow; eyes dark brown: the plumage on the upper parts dark brown: breast and belly paler, blotched with white in an irregular manner: the legs are yellow, very stout, and feathered only to the knees. They feed mostly on fish; which they take by darting on them when swimming near the surface, and even, like the Kingfisher, plunging under water after their prey: they likewise feed on water-fowl, and are mostly seen hovering over the sea or large rivers.