

their gloomy residences: sometimes an entire chain of mountains is strewed with them from spot to spot: they always keep together, and fly in troops, and these immense bodies of carnivorous birds seem to live in a very friendly manner among themselves; for sometimes three different nests may be found contiguous to each other in the same hole of the rock.

The voracity of these vultures is excessive. Levaillant relates that having wounded an oricou occupied in devouring the body of a hippopotamus, the bird endeavoured to snatch lumps of his prey while endeavouring to fly, and although he had at that time six pounds and a half of meat in its stomach. Weighed down by this great quantity of food, and detained by his wound and his voracity, he gave time for Levaillant to approach near him before he could rise. With the assistance of his Hottentots he overcame him, but with difficulty. The bird defended itself a long time with intrepidity: he bit the musquets with his beak, or struck them with his wings and talons with such force, that at each blow he scratched the barrels.

It is only, however, in the imperious act of self defence where his life is at stake that the
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