

merits like almost every other bird of prey, to be preserved and even favored in its propagation.

The appetite which the butcher bird possesses for insects, leads him to use precautions that he may not be disappointed of his favourite food: and this foresight supposes combinations which denote a great sagacity of instinct. The insects appear only at stated periods, and some species, particularly the larger ones, only appearing during a very short time, the butcher bird would often be exposed to the pains of hunger, if it did not form a sort of magazine where it finds, upon necessity, resources which secure it from inevitable distress, but for these means. It is not in the holes of trees, nor in the earth that it deposits these provisions, which are of such a nature that they would soon corrupt if kept in a close place: it is in the open air that the butcher bird arranges them here and there; it sticks its superfluous prey upon the thorns of bushes, and it knows where to find it when in want of it.

The custom of hanging its prey upon thorns, &c. is not peculiar, as Levaillant thinks, to foreign butcher birds: it seems to be common to every species.

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