

Beak robust, upper mandible, on each side, armed with a tooth. *Legs* short, robust. *Toes* armed with crooked claws.

Order 1.—The *swimmers*, or web-footed birds, form a very important part of the feathered race, both as furnishing man with food, and as ministering greatly to his comfort, by their down and feathers, when he retires to rest; and also by their action upon the inhabitants of the waters, both of the sea and rivers, which form the principal part of their food. Cuvier remarks that these are the only birds in which the neck exceeds—and sometimes considerably—the length of the legs. Swimming on the surface, they can thus dip deeper to seize their prey. The same remark may be extended to the Saurians, in which, though the majority have a short neck, one fossil animal,* which appears to be the analogue of the swan, has a very long one. Other birds, as well as those of the present Order, are distinguished by the length of the neck; as the peacock, the turkey, and several other Gallinaceans; and the Ostrich and its congeners are still more remarkable in that respect. This structure is probably as useful to them as to the web-footed birds, in enabling them to secure articles of food that would otherwise be out of their reach.

The birds at the foot of this Order, and indeed of the whole Class, are the *short-winged swimmers*, particularly the *auk*† and the *penguin*;‡ the one having its station in the northern, and the other in the southern seas, reaching to the antarctic circle. The *northern* one, the *auk*, seems to rank above the penguin, for its wings have those feathers which, from their office being to propel birds when they fly, are denominated *rowing* feathers,§ and they can flutter and

* Plesiosaurus dolichodeirus.

† Alca.

‡ Aptenodytes.

§ Remiges.