

rest in flocks on the grassy plains, at some distance from the water. Being at anchor, as I have said, in one of the deep creeks between the islands of the Parana, as the evening drew to a close, one of these scissor-beaks suddenly appeared. The water was quite still, and many little fish were rising. The bird continued for a long time to skim the surface, flying in its wild and irregular manner up and down the narrow canal, now dark with the growing night and the shadows of the overhanging trees. At Monte Video, I observed that some large flocks during the day remained on the mud-banks at the head of the harbor, in the same manner as on the grassy plains near the Parana; and every evening they took flight seaward. From these facts I suspect that the *Rhynchops* generally fishes by night, at which time many of the lower animals come most abundantly to the surface. M. Lesson states that he has seen these birds opening the shells of the *maetræ* buried in the sand-banks on the coast of Chile: from their weak bills, with the lower mandible so much projecting, their short legs and long wings, it is very improbable that this can be a general habit.

In our course down the Parana, I observed only three other birds whose habits are worth mentioning. One is a small kingfisher (*Ceryle Americana*); it has a longer tail than the European species, and hence does not sit in so stiff and upright a position. Its flight also, instead of being direct and rapid, like the course of an arrow, is weak and undulatory, as among the soft-billed birds. It utters a low note, like the clicking together of two small stones. A small green parrot (*Conurus murinus*), with a gray breast, appears to prefer the tall trees on the islands to any other situation for its building-place. A number of nests are placed so close together as to form one great mass of sticks. These parrots always live in flocks, and commit great ravages on the corn-fields. I was told that near Colonia 2,500 were killed in the course of one year. A bird with a forked tail, terminated by two long feathers (*Tyrannus savana*), and named by the Spaniards Scissor-tail, is very common near Buenos Ayres: