

during that time the female leaves the nest only long enough to get food. While the female is setting, the male is often seen standing on a rock or piece of high ground near the nest keeping watch. If danger approaches, he gives a sharp call, at which the female leaves the nest and either hides or flies away. The chicks are covered with black down, and have large red bills when hatched. They are fed on insects found on the sand or in seaweed, and soon become very active, although it is some time before they fly. The parent birds teach the chicks to find their own food when they are quite young, and they are often seen searching in seaweed together. The redbills are clever at hiding their chicks and misleading an enemy if one goes near. As soon as they lose their down the chicks get the plumage of an adult redbill, instead of having a less conspicuous plumage the first year, as the young of some species of birds have.

A PLEA FOR THE HARRIER.

Lack of knowledge is the chief reason that many species are placed on the "black list." Thus, birds of prey generally are almost universally condemned. Yet, as with the kestrel, Britain's most numerous "hawk," common - sense, backed by observation, is gradually replacing prejudice. On many game reserves to-day this little falcon goes unmolested after generations of persecution, for it has been found that partridges, pheasants, etc., are only taken when very small, and even then the pressure of hunger seems to be necessary. On the other hand, it devours large numbers of rats, mice, moles, etc., to say nothing of various species of injurious insects.

So with our own harrier. May we not be premature in making it an outlaw! One frequently sees the same controversy revived from time to time in the press: "Is the harrier harmful or beneficial?" Sportsmen generally and Acclimatisation Societies in particular condemn it on account of an occasional pheasant or quail. Here it may be as well to point out that very few people indeed have actually seen a harrier strike a game bird. In the majority of instances it is a case of having seen the bird rise from a carcase. This, however, proves nothing. Nearly everyone knows how partial the harrier is to carrion as witness the easiness with which it is captured by a baited trap. Even though the victim's body be fresh and even warm, that proves nothing, for the harrier has remarkable sight and quickly discovers a tasty tit-bit.

Some farmers also condemn the harrier because they maybe lose a fowl. This loss is usually impressed upon them by the wild