

Genus HEMIPODIUS, Temm.

GEN. CHAR. *Beak* moderate, slender, straight, very compressed; culmen elevated and curved towards the point. *Nostrils* lateral, linear, longitudinally cleft, partly closed by a naked membrane. *Tarsi* rather long. *Toes* three before, entirely divided: no posterior toe. *Tail* composed of weak yielding feathers clustered together, and concealed by the feathers of the back. *Wings* moderate, the first quill-feather the longest.

ANDALUSIAN TURNIX.

Hemipodius tachydromus, Temm.

La Turnix tachydrome.

THE birds of this genus are mostly inhabitants of the intertropical regions of the Old World; two species, it is true, have been discovered in the southern parts of Europe, but in such limited numbers as to prove satisfactorily that the northern portions of Africa are their true habitat, consequently the southern parts of Spain, Italy, and the Islands of the Mediterranean are among the utmost limits of its range northward. They differ from the true Quails (*Coturnix*), in the total absence of the hind toe, and in the long and slender form of their bills: they are the most diminutive birds of the gallinaceous tribe, being not more than half the size of the Common Quail. M. Temminck states that they are polygamous, and that they give a preference to sterile lands, sandy plains, and the confines of deserts, over which they run with surprising quickness; he also states that the young and old do not associate in company or in beves as is the case with the Quail. Their food is said to consist principally of insects, to which are added small seeds, &c.

The sexes are so much alike that it is very difficult to distinguish them by their plumage. Col. Sykes states that the birds of this genus which he observed in the Dukhun, viz. *Hem. pugnax*, Temm., *Hem. Taigoor*, Sykes, and *Hem. Dussumier*, Temm., were either solitary or in pairs, and mostly found in pulse and *Chillie* fields (*Capsicum annum*). The last-named species "frequents thick grass, and sits so close as to expose itself to the danger of being trodden upon," and its "flight is so abrupt and short, that ere the gun is well up to the shoulder the bird is down again," in all which respects we doubt not the bird here represented very closely resembles them.

The Andalusian Turnix is tolerably abundant at Gibraltar and that part of Spain which borders the Mediterranean, being more scarce in the central portions, and in the northern and all similar latitudes altogether absent.

The top of the head is dark brown, streaked longitudinally with reddish yellow; throat white; the feathers on the sides of the chest reddish chestnut, those of the flanks yellowish white, with a crescent-shaped mark of rich brown occupying the centre of each; lower part of the belly pure white; the upper surface is dark brown with numerous zigzag lines of reddish ash, and transversely rayed with lines of brown and chestnut, each feather being finely margined with white; coverts of the wing yellow with a spot of reddish chestnut on the inner web; primaries ashy brown, the outer web bordered with white; bill and legs greyish flesh colour.

The Plate represents a male and female of the natural size.