

## CALLIPEPLA GAMBELII.

### Gambel's Partridge.

#### SPECIFIC CHARACTER.

*Call. loris*, gutture et cristâ nigris; hâc erectâ, paululûm recurvatâ, nequidè ut in *C. Californicâ*, abdomine inferiore nigro pone lunulam latam cervinam; lateribus nitidè castaneis, singulis plumis strigâ albâ centrali notatis.

Forehead, chin and throat deep velvety black, encircled from the posterior angle of the eye with a broad line of white; across the head and passing down behind the eye another line of white, bounded posteriorly with black; crest straight, erect, and of a deep black; occiput rusty red; feathers of the sides and back of the neck lanceolate in form and of a blue-grey, encircled all round with brown, and with a narrow line of the same colour down the centre; back, wings, rump and upper tail-coverts olive-grey; tertiaries edged with buff narrowly on their outer webs and broadly on their inner ones; tail grey; chest blue-grey; upper part of the abdomen buff; centre of the abdomen black; flank feathers rich chestnut, with a line of buffy white down the centre; lower part of the abdomen and under tail-coverts sandy buff, with a broad stripe of greyish brown down the centre of each of the latter; bill black; feet brown.

Total length,  $9\frac{3}{4}$  inches; bill,  $\frac{1}{16}$ ; wing,  $4\frac{1}{2}$ ; tail, 4; tarsi,  $1\frac{1}{4}$ ; middle toe and nail,  $1\frac{1}{2}$ .

*Lophortyx Gambelii*, Nutt. Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phil., vol. i. p. 260.

*Callipepla Gambelii*, Gamb. Journ. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phil., vol. i. p. 219, New Ser.

*Callipepla venusta*, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part XIV. p. 70.

---

In my description of *Callipepla Californica* I have stated that it is second in beauty to no member of the group; but at that time I was unaware of the existence of the *C. Gambelii*, which may dispute the palm, and is indeed a still finer bird. As yet I have only seen two examples, one of which is in the Museum at Neufchâtel, the other in that of the Garden of Plants at Paris. As soon as these came under my observation, I hastened to make the existence of the species known by characterizing it in the "Proceedings of the Zoological Society," under the name of *venusta*, but soon after found that it had been previously named *Gambelii* by Nuttall after his friend Dr. Gambel, which appellation I have accordingly adopted, and sunk my own into a synonym. I have also great pleasure in giving the following extract from Dr. Gambel's account of the species:—

"This beautiful species I discovered on the eastern side of the Californian Range of mountains in 1841. They were numerous, in flocks of fifteen or twenty, running about in company with another species, which I thought new also; but the specimens I had procured, whilst engaged in skinning this, were devoured almost at my elbow by a couple of hungry ravens. Several spiral-podded species of *Prosopis*, with low spreading branches, afforded them excellent covert, and the seeds of bushy Malvas, Chenopodiums, and Artemisias, probably served them as food in that dreary region.

"Here, where one would suppose it to be impossible for any animal to subsist, they were seen running about in small flocks, occasionally uttering a low guttural call of recognition, sometimes of several notes very different from that of the common species. When flying they utter a loud sharp whistle, and conspicuously display the long crest."

It is very nearly allied to *C. Californica*, but is distinguished from that bird by the erect carriage of the crest, the rich colouring of the flank feathers, by the absence of the scale-like markings of the abdomen, and the greater length of the tail.

Habitat. California.

The figures are of the natural size, taken from an adult specimen kindly lent to me by M. Louis Coulon, Director of the Museum at Neufchâtel.