PUCRASIA XANTHOSPILA, *G. R. Gray.*

Chinese Pucras Pheasant.

Pucrasia xanthospila, G. R. Gray in Proc. of Zool. Soc. 1864, p. 259, pl. xx.

The great range of mountains running eastward from the Caspian Sea through Affghanistan and northern India to the neighbourhood of Pekin in China is tenanted by four species of Snow-Partridges (*Tetraogalli*), the same number of Horned Pheasants (*Ceriornes*), and four species of the form represented on the opposite plate: all these birds, with the Monauls (*Lophophori*), the blood-stained Partridge (*Ithaginis*), the *Catreus Wallichii*, and the *Euplocami*, which, curiously enough, are also four in number, are peculiar to this favoured region, none of them extending their range either to the plains of India, the Neilgherries, or any of the out-jutting ranges towards the south. The members of the genus *Pucrasia* inhabit the higher lands from the most eastern part of China to the western portion of the Himalayas. The present new species was described by Mr. G. R. Gray in June 1864, from two specimens, male and female, presented to the British Museum by the Hon. Sir Frederick W. A. Bruce, K.C.B. Since that date not only have other skins been sent to Europe, but living birds have been forwarded from Northern China in considerable numbers, confirming the truth of the remark I have made in my history of the *Phasianus Reevesii*, that the opening of China to the scientific world has materially contributed to our knowledge of the avifauna of the world: that the natural productions of that great country are by no means exhausted, there can be no doubt; what may next arrive, we of course know not; but all naturalists are looking forward with great interest to the collections which may be expected from time to time to be transmitted to this country.

As Mr. Gray's account of the bird has been so recently published, and his technical description is moreover very accurate, I take the liberty of transcribing what he has written.

"This bird," says Mr. Gray, "though noticed by Dr. Lamprey in the Proceedings of the Zoological Society for 1862, p. 221, as 'another kind of Pheasant found in the Tien-Tsin market,' was not inserted by Mr. Swinhoe in his "Catalogue of the Birds of China" published in the 'Proceedings of the Zoological Society for 1863'; it is thought therefore that the description of the present examples may be acceptable to the Society as adding an interesting species to the Catalogue of Chinese birds previously printed in their publications.

"Forehead, cheeks, throat, and the lower or lengthened part of the crest black, glossed with green; crown and upper or shorter part of the crest of an obscure sandy buff, which is brighter on the ends of the longer feathers; on the side of the neck a pure-white space surrounded on three of its sides by the glossy green black colour, behind this a space of pale sandy buff with a line of white down the shaft of each feather; some of the feathers have a black line along their margins; napes, sides of the breast, back, and wings black, with a grey mark down the centre of each feather, and a very narrow black line down each side of the shaft, while the outer margin is broadly margined with grey; feathers of the under surface similarly marked, but the grey much paler; the castaneous colour down the middle of the breast and abdomen not so rich as in the other species; wings black, with white shafts and brownish-grey edges; primaries brownish black on their inner, and buff on their outer webs, and at the tip of both; tertiaries black, with the shafts and outer margins greyish white, the black in some feathers varied with rufous; central tail-feathers grey on each side of the black shafts, then a line of black broadly bordered externally with greyish castaneous, then narrowly with black and lastly with grey; outer tail-feathers grey, banded obliquely near the middle and tip with black, the first band sometimes interrupted, the second one entire and broad, and each feather tipped with pure white; under tail-coverts black, conspicuously tipped with white; vent-feathers similar, but with a castaneous spot on each side.

"The general tint of the female is pale brown, blotched and freckled with black, the blotches being most conspicuous on the back of the neck, upper part of the back, and wings; lower part of the back and the rump pale greyish brown varied with grey, and freckled with black, and with some small blotches of black on the tail-coverts; central tail-feathers greyish brown, with interrupted bands of brownish black and white; outer tail-feathers grey, banded with black, which is slightly varied with castaneous, and each feather tipped with pure white; throat white, irregularly spotted beneath the lower mandible with black; feathers on the sides of the throat white, margined with black spots; breast pale rufous brown, with the tip of each feather white, and the base and outer side black; feathers of the thighs black, with white shafts and tips, some of them varied with pale rufous; under tail-coverts black, marked on their sides with castaneous, and conspicuously tipped with pure white."

Time and future research must make us acquainted with the habits and economy of this fine species, in the absence of any knowledge of which I must content myself with giving figures of the two sexes nearly of the size of life.