# GALLOPERDIX SPADICEUS.

## Rufous Spur-Fowl.

*Tetrao spadiceus*, Gmel. Edit. Linn. Syst. Nat. tom. i. par. ii. p. 759.—Gray, Ill. Ind. Zool. vol. ii. pl. 42. fig. 2.
*Perdix spadicea*, Lath. Ind. Orn. tom. ii. p. 644.—Temm. Hist. Nat. des Gall. tom. iii. pp. 315 & 719.—Bonnat. et Vieill. Ency. Méth. Orn. part i. p. 208.
*Le Perdrix rouge de Madagascar*, Sonn. Voy. aux Ind. tom. ii. p. 169 ?—Ib. Edit. Buff. Hist. des Ois. tom. vii. p. 57 ?
*Brown African Partridge*, Lath. Gen. Syn. vol. iv. p. 759 ?—Ib. Gen. Hist. vol. viii. p. 271 ?
*Plectrophora (Polyplectron) Northiæ*, Gray, Ill. Ind. Zool. vol. ii. pl. 43. fig. 1 (female).
*Francolinus spadiceus*, Sykes in Proc. of Comm. of Sci. and Corr. of Zool. Soc. part ii. p. 154.—Jerd. Madr. Journ. of Sci. vol. xii. p. 5.
*Ithaginis Northiæ*, Gray, List of Birds in Brit. Mus. Coll. part iii. p. 32.
*Galloperdix spadiceus*, Blyth, Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. Calcutta, p. 241.
*Kokutree*, of the Mahrattas.

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Judging from the very numerous examples of this species which are sent home in collections from India, it would seem that it must be very generally dispersed, from the base of the Himalayas to the extreme southern point of the Indian peninsula. Mr. Jerdon sent a large supply for our museums from Madras, and I have several examples from Bombay and other parts of Western India. I have no doubt that it would bear captivity well, and that, if introduced into favourable localities in this country, it would not only live but breed with us. Latham and some other authors give Madagascar, and, I believe, Africa also, as habitats of this bird, but I apprehend that on this point they were mistaken, for I have no reason to believe that it occurs anywhere out of India.

Colonel Sykes, who found it very common in the thick brushwood of the Ghauts, had examples of both sexes alive in his possession for some time, and states that "they are excellent eating. The male has a harsh call of three syllables, *Kot-kut-ree*, whence the Mahratta name. The female in confinement uttered little notes like the twittering of a chicken." A male in Col. Sykes's collection had three large spurs on one leg and two on the other.

Mr. Jerdon informs us that "this Spur-Fowl is only found in the denser jungles, as well of the eastern as of the western coast, and generally along with the *Jungle Fowl*. It is found in the low brushwood of the lofty forests, and when flushed, as it is with difficulty, frequently perches on the bough of some lofty tree. It is generally met with in pairs, and feeding on various seeds and insects. I found the craws of some crammed with insects alone, among which various species of *Cimices* were the most predominant. Its flesh is excellent and of very high flavour. It is found in the dense woods at the top of the Neilgherries. The natives generally consider this bird as more allied to the Jungle Fowls than to the Partridges, and it is said to run with its tail elevated."

The plumage of the male is soft and silky to the touch, and extremely chaste in its colouring; the female differs considerably, her markings being much stronger, as shown in the lower figure of the accompanying Plate, which represents that sex.

The male has the head and neck greyish brown; the feathers of the upper surface chestnut-red, each narrowly margined with grey, and minutely freckled with black, particularly near the edges; upper tail-coverts similar, but without the grey margin; quills brown, the secondaries broadly margined on their external web with minute freckles of chestnut and brownish black; under surface bright chestnut-red, each feather narrowly margined with greyish olive; lower part of the abdomen and vent dull brown; tail blackish brown, freckled with chestnut; orbits red; bill, legs and feet reddish horn-colour; irides reddish brown.

The female has the whole of the upper surface and tail irregularly banded and freckled with black, buff and dull chestnut, the black assuming a somewhat arrow-head shape; feathers of the upper part of the breast brownish black, edged with reddish buff; feathers of the lower part of the breast and centre of the abdomen rufous, tipped with black; vent and under tail-coverts brown.

The figures represent the two sexes the size of life.