

ACCENTOR ALTAICUS, *Brandt.*

Altaian Accentor.

- Accentor altaicus*, Brandt, Bull. des Acad. des Sci. de St. Pétersb., i. no. 23.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 187, *Accentor*, sp. 9.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 306, *Accentor*, sp. 10.
——— *Himalayanus*, Blyth, Journ. Asiat. Soc. Beng., vol. xi. p. 187.
——— *variegatus*, Blyth, Journ. of Asiat. Soc. Beng., vol. xii. p. 958.—Ib. Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. Calcutta, p. 131.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 305, *Accentor*, sp. 3.—Horsf. Cat. of Birds in Mus. East Ind. Comp., vol. i. p. 359.
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THAT the bird here represented—the *Accentor variegatus* of Mr. Blyth—is identical with the *A. altaicus* of M. Brandt I have little doubt, since the description given by the latter naturalist precisely accords with the Indian bird. Like the *A. atrogularis*, this species ranges over the high and sterile countries extending from the Himalaya to the Altai. It is from the former of these that all the specimens in my collection have been received; those in the Honourable East India Company's Museum are from Nepal, while those in the Museum of the Asiatic Society at Calcutta are from Sikkim.

In its general contour and in the disposition of its markings the present and the European species, *A. alpinus*, are very much alike; differences, however, of sufficient importance occur to establish its specific value; the Eastern bird being much smaller than the European one, having the dark markings of the back more conspicuous, and the feathers of the breast distinctly bordered with greyish white.

The following is Professor Brandt's description:—

“Le Musée de l'Académie contient une espèce, tirée dans l'Altai, voisine en quelque sorte de l'*Accentor alpinus*, mais qui offre aussi quelques marques communes avec l'*Accentor modularis*, auquel elle ressemble par rapport à la grandeur. Je nommerai cette espèce *Accentor altaicus*.

“*Accentor altaicus*, mihi.—Rostrum nigrum. Caput supra cum cervice griseum. Genæ ejusdem coloris, sed albo fuscoque longitudinaliter striolatæ. Gula alba, sparsim nigro fasciolata. Pectoris superioris partis pennæ medio ferrugineæ, albo limbatae, inferioris cum pennis hypochondriorum, crissi et tectricibus caudæ medio fuscae, ferrugineo parum imbutæ albo limbatae. Abdomen medio album. Tectrices alæ inferiores albo et griseo fasciolatæ. Dorsi superior pars ferruginea fusco-nigro maculata, ob pennas medio fusco-nigras margine ferrugineas. Dorsi posterior pars grisea. Remiges primariae et rectrices fusco-nigricantes, margine externo albo limbatae. A rostri apice ad caudæ apicem 5" 3". Rostri longitudo ad frontem 6". Tarsi longitudo 1". Alæ longitudo ab angulo humerali 3½".”

Head and back of the neck grey, with a brown streak down each feather; cheeks grey, longitudinally striped with dusky white; throat white, thinly fasciated with black; feathers of the upper part of the breast ferruginous, margined with white; lower part of the body and flanks dusky, washed with ferruginous, and edged with whitish; centre of the abdomen white; upper part of the body ferruginous, spotted with dusky, or the feathers dusky black, bordered with ferruginous; lower part of the back grey; primaries and secondaries brown, edged with pale brown; tail dark brown, with a mark of buffy white at the tip of each feather; under tail-coverts dark brown, broadly margined with white; bill brown, lighter at the base; irides dark brown; legs light brown.

The figures are of the natural size.