

ACCENTOR STROPHIATUS, *Hodgs.*

Banded Accentor.

Accentor strophiatius, Hodgs. Journ. Asiat. Soc. Beng., vol. xii. p. 959.—Gray, Zool. Misc. (1844) p. 83.—Hodgs. in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xiii. p. 34.—Gray, Cat. of Spec. and Draw. of Mamm. and Birds presented to Brit. Mus. by B. H. Hodgson, Esq., p. 72.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 187, *Accentor*, sp. 5. pl. li.—Blyth, Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. of Calcutta, p. 131.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 305.—Horsf. Cat. of Birds in Mus. East Ind. Comp., vol. i. p. 360.

THIS species is the commonest of the Indian Accentors, and also one of the most widely diffused; it is, moreover, subject to greater variations in the colouring of its plumage than any other, and it has become doubtful to me whether there be not two species confounded under the term *strophiatius*, or whether the Nepalese birds, with a darker style of plumage, and with larger, blacker and more numerous striæ on the throat and abdomen, are not different from the lighter-coloured birds which inhabit the western Sub-Himalayan ranges.

In the absence of any positive information respecting them, I consider these birds to be merely varieties dependent upon locality, and I would call the attention of Indian ornithologists to the subject. The light-coloured birds in my collection were procured by Captain Boys.

There appears to be considerable difference in the size of the sexes, some of the specimens being very much smaller than others; in all probability the smaller birds, which, moreover, have the rufous band of the breast of a paler hue, are females.

Crown of the head and all the upper surface olive-grey, with a streak of dark or blackish-brown down the centre of each feather; over each eye a streak of buffy-white, expanding into a patch of rich buff behind the eye, above this buffy-white streak a broader one of brownish-black; wings brown, margined, and the coverts tipped, with greyish-buff; lores and ear-coverts dark brown; throat white, speckled with black; across the breast a large gorget of light rusty-red, which colour extends on to the flanks, but here there is a small central streak of brown down each feather; centre of the abdomen whitish; under tail-coverts light brown, margined with buffy-white; upper tail-coverts and tail brown; bill dark brown; feet fleshy-brown.

In other examples from Nepaul the general tint is much darker; the mark behind the eye and the margins of the feathers of the upper surface are more rufous; the throat is broadly striated with brown, and the under surface is also conspicuously striated in a similar manner. This may be the dress of the female or young.

The figures represent the lighter-coloured birds of the natural size. The pretty little plant is the *Androsace sarmentosa*, Wall.