

# HARPACTES FASCIATUS.

## Fasciated Trogon.

- Trogon fasciatus*, Gmel. Edit. Linn. Syst. Nat. tom. i. par. i. p. 405.—Lath. Ind. Orn. tom. i. p. 200.—Ib. Gen. Syn. vol. ii. p. 492.—Penn. Ind. Zool. p. 35. pl. iv.
- Trogon Ceylonensis*, Briss. Orn. 8vo, vol. ii. p. 91.
- *Malabaricus*, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc. part iv. p. 26.—Ib. Mon. of Trog. pl. 31.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 71, *Trogon*, sp. 1.—Jerdon, Mad. Journ. of Sci. vol. xi. p. 233.
- Harpactes Malabaricus*, Swains. Class. of Birds, vol. ii. p. 337.—Ib. List of Birds in Coll. Brit. Mus. part ii. p. 44.
- *fasciatus*, Blyth, Drafts of a Fauna Indica (third tribe of the Picæ), p. 8.—Ib. Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. Calcutta, p. 80.
- Kufni Churi*, of some Hindoos.
- Kurna*, of the Mahrattas.
- Kakerni Hukki*, of the Canarese.
- Rantvan Kondea*, of the Cingalese, Blyth.

THE island of Ceylon and the southern part of the Peninsula of India are the true habitat of the *Harpactes fasciatus*; it there represents the *H. Kasumba* of the opposite peninsula of Malacca. It has been long known to writers on natural history; a description of it being included in Gmelin's "Systema Naturæ" and a figure in Pennant's "Indian Zoology," published in 1790. It is, however, to more recent observers that we are indebted for the little that is even now known of its habits and economy. Mr. E. L. Layard informs me that in Ceylon "it inhabits the high tree-jungle which the natives call *Mookoolaney*; it there frequents the summits of the loftiest trees, and feeds on spiders, Mantidæ and Coleoptera; it sits across a branch with the head drawn down between the shoulders; it is by no means a solitary bird, being found in small parties of three or four in number, which always follow each other when one takes wing. It does not appear to extend its range beyond Kandy. Dr. Kelaart says it is sometimes very numerous at Newera Elia; he likewise states that the Cingalese call it *Ratwon Kondea*, but the natives in the neighbourhood of the localities in which I found it were ignorant of its existence and had no name for it."

So much for the bird in Ceylon. I now proceed to give the interesting note respecting it included in Mr. Jerdon's "Catalogue of the Birds of the Peninsula of India":—

"This very richly-plumaged Trogon is of rare occurrence in Southern India, and I have only found it in the densest portions of the jungle in Malabar and the Wynaad. It is usually seen seated motionless on the branch of a tree, occasionally flying off to capture an insect, and sometimes, though rarely, returning to the same perch, generally taking up a new position, and wandering much about from tree to tree. I almost always observed it solitary, occasionally in pairs, and on one occasion four or five were seen together. In the stomach I have always found fragments of large Coleopterous insects. The Hindoostanee name *Koofnee chooree* is given (says Mr. Elliott) 'from the bird sitting with its head sunk in the shoulders, as if it had no neck, or as if dressed in a faqueer's koofnee.'"

Mr. Blyth remarks that this species is enumerated in Mr. Elliott's "Catalogue of Birds inhabiting the South Mahratta country," and no doubt it is the species obtained by Captain Tickell at Dampára in Dholbhúm, which would give it an extensive range in the Indian peninsula.

The male has the head, neck and breast sooty black, bounded below by a narrow crescent of white, separating the sooty black of the breast from the rich carmine-red of the under surface; upper surface orange-brown, becoming paler and brighter on the rump and upper tail-coverts; wings black, the coverts and secondaries crossed by numerous fine irregular bars of white, and the primaries narrowly edged externally with the same hue; two centre tail-feathers chestnut, narrowly tipped with black, the next on each side chestnut at the base and black at the tip, the chestnut advancing in a bifurcated form towards the tip of the outer web; the next on each side entirely black; the three lateral feathers on each side black at the base, and largely tipped with white, the white advancing on the margin of the outer web nearly to the base, and the black along the shaft to the tip; irides deep brown; bill and orbits fine deep cobalt-blue; legs light blue.

The female differs in having the head and neck brown, with a yellowish tinge on the chest; the under surface rich ochraceous; and the bars on the wings ochraceous brown instead of white.

The figures represent the two sexes of the natural size.