

TURNIX AFRICANUS, Desf.

Andalusian Turnix.

Turnix africanus, Desfont. Mém. de l'Acad. des Sci., 1789, p. 500.

—— *sylvaticus*, Desf. ibid.

Tetrao gibraltarius et *T. andalusicus*, Gmel. edit. Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 766.

Turnix andalusica, Bonn. Ency. Méth., Orn., part 1.

Perdix gibraltaria et *P. andalusica*, Lath. Ind. Orn., vol. ii. p. 656.

Hemipodius tachydromus et *H. lunulatus*, Temm. Man. d'Orn., 1815, pp. 314, 315.

—— *andalusicus*, Boie, Isis, 1822, p. 558

Ortygis andalusica, Keys. et Blas. Wirbelth. Eur., p. 66.

Turnix sylvatica, Desf., Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc. 1866, p. 210.

IN the warmer portions of the Old World there occurs a group of small birds which have been classed, and perhaps correctly, with the *Gallinaceæ*; in size they resemble the Quails; some of the species are a little larger than those birds, and others much smaller. They are all solitary in their habits, and never go in covies or bevs; some have stout rather heavy bills, while in others this organ is slender and longer than in any other Gallinaceous birds of the same size. These, the *Turnices* or *Hemipodes*, have, as the latter name implies, but three toes, while, as is well known, the Quails, Partridges, &c. have a fourth generally well developed hind one; they all have short rounded wings, and rise with a loud whirring noise from the arid and scrubby plains they frequent. The females, which are by far the largest in size, and the finest in the colouring and distinctness of their markings, invariably lay four eggs in a slight depression of the ground, with little or no nest. Their flesh is dry and not very good for the table, although they are often pocketed by sportsmen and taken home as bush-game.

Of this group of birds many species inhabit India, China, the Philippines, Java, and Australia, and some Africa, one of which, the bird represented on the opposite Plate, has two or three times been killed in England; hence arises the necessity for giving it a place in the Birds of Great Britain. The circumstances under which it has a claim to be included in our avifauna are briefly these:—

In the month of November 1844, Mr. Thomas Goatley, of Chipping Norton, in Oxfordshire, sent a communication to the 'Annals and Magazine of Natural History,' in which he stated that he had lately received a bird which appeared to be new to this country,—a Quail having no hind toe, and not mentioned, he believed, in any work on British ornithology to which he had access, but which appeared to agree with Latham's description of *Perdix gibraltarius*. The bird was shot on the Cornwall estate, about three miles from Chipping Norton, in a field of barley, on the 29th of the previous October, after which date another was killed near the same spot by the same person; but its head was shot off, and it was otherwise so mutilated as to be unfit for preservation. This might probably have completed the pair, the former being a male. It had in its gizzard two or three husks of barley, several small seeds like charlock, and some particles of gravel, and was very fat. It was considerably injured by the shot; but Mr. Goatley had it set up, and justly considered it as a valuable addition to his small collection of British birds. The above is the specimen the occurrence of which is noted in the 'Zoologist' for 1845, p. 872, and of which a woodcut is given at page 989 of the same volume; it was also the subject of the article "Andalusian Hemipode," in the supplement to Mr. Yarrell's 'History of British Birds,' p. 43. It remained the solitary example of the occurrence of the bird in our islands until the year 1865, when Alfred Beaumont, Esq., exhibited, at the Meeting of the Huddersfield Naturalists' Society held on the 21st of June, an example which was taken alive at Fartown, near Huddersfield. This specimen Mr. Beaumont kindly sent up for my inspection accompanied by the following note:—"The bird was purchased alive by the son of S. D. Mosley, a birdstuffer of Huddersfield, from two Irishmen on the 7th of April, 1865, near the Fartown bar on the Bradford Road. He saw it in the hand of one of the men, and thinking it a novelty gave them sixpence for it; the Irishmen regarded it as a young Partridge."

Considerable confusion appears to exist respecting this bird in the works of the earlier writers, by whom it was characterized as two distinct species; this is now known to be an error, since only one bird of this form is found in Europe and on the opposite coast of Barbary. According to Latham, "it occurs in considerable numbers in all the environs of the Garrison of Gibraltar, but not upon any part of the Rock itself. It appears at the same time as the Common Quail, and continues there throughout the winter and spring, but about the breeding-time disappears for the summer; yet there is no reason to suppose that it quits the