

"For several years after its first introduction it was much prized and sought after by sportsmen, as it was a larger bird for the table, although very inferior in richness and flavour to the common Grey Partridge; and it is still preferred by some, from its flesh being whiter and more delicate. Being also of bolder disposition, more alert, and rising at a greater distance, and consequently more difficult to secure, its acquisition was thought to reflect more sportsman-like credit upon him who possessed the skill to bring it down. Its habits becoming better known, it was found that a great difficulty attending the shooting of this species is due to its practice of running to a distance after alighting, on which account the dogs coming upon the scent were baffled, being induced to draw upon their game; and even then the birds will not rise except at a very considerable distance. Very little sport can therefore be expected, unless the weather be extremely wet; they then are less inclined to run, rise at a lesser distance, and the sportsman has a greater chance of success. The most effectual means of securing them is to attack them during severe weather, in the snow, when the birds resort to the hedgerows for shelter, whence they may be dislodged and then easily shot.

"The female lays from ten to fifteen eggs, of a light stone-colour, freckled with very minute reddish-brown spots, varied here and there with spots of a larger size, and of a rather darker colour. The nest is constructed of dried grass and leaves, on the ground in some warm and sheltered part of a field of growing corn, grass, or clover."

Perhaps the most interesting portion of Mr. Stevenson's account of this species is his remarks on its supposed immigration from the Continent to this country; and I quite agree with him and Mr. Alfred Newton in believing that the birds found on the beach and denes of Norfolk are individuals which have been influenced by a desire to seek other countries, but, finding the attempt beyond their powers, have returned in a tired state to the shores they had left.

"Both Mr. Lubbock and Messrs. Gurney and Fisher," says Mr. Stevenson, "have alluded to the supposed migratory habits of the Red-legged Partridge; and my own inquiries amongst naturalists and others residing in the vicinity of the sea certainly confirm their statements as to small coveys of these birds, generally in an exhausted condition, being met with in the spring of the year on the various parts of the coast. Captain Longe, of Yarmouth, informs me that in many successive springs, about March or April, he has found French Partridges early in the morning running about the beach close to the water, and on one occasion flushed a covey of from twenty to thirty, which flew around once or twice and then out to sea, still keeping on in a direct course until he lost sight of them, although using a good glass. Every year about the same time many are captured under the boats and fishing-baskets lying on the beach, and others are run down by lads in the gardens near the denes, and sometimes even within the town itself . . . They have been observed in like manner on the Suffolk coast, near Lowestoft, so exhausted as to allow themselves to be picked up by hand. . . . At Cromer, also, the beachmen seem to be fully aware of the annual appearance of these birds on the coast about the end of March. On this point both Mr. William Barclay, of Leyton, and myself have received reliable testimony from one of the most experienced and intelligent fishermen at that favourite watering-place. In answer to my inquiries, William Mayes writes:—'All the information I can give you about French Partridges is that they come over about the middle of March or beginning of April, some ten or twelve in a flock, the wind mostly south-east and south. I have seen them when I have been out to sea *four and five miles* from land. None come over in the autumn.' That these concurrent testimonies are indicative of some migratory movement of the Red-legged Partridge there can be no doubt; but while it is by no means easy to decide from what part of the continent we might look for an influx of this species, and there is really no place abroad that these birds could have come from to alight on the Cromer beach, the above statements are by no means incompatible with the idea that emigration, and not immigration, is the true explanation of this somewhat difficult subject. In this view, I know, Mr. Alfred Newton entirely concurs; and the fact that the French Partridge was unknown in this county until introduced is one of the strongest arguments against its vernal immigration at the present time. On the other hand, after the success which has attended its importation and its rapid increase throughout the eastern counties, it is far from improbable that a portion should annually seek to extend their area, and, finding themselves stopped by the German Ocean, attempt to cross it. These birds, or a portion of them (some probably falling short and being drowned at sea), misjudging the distance and their own powers of flight, would return again to our shores in a exhausted state, and when picked up under such circumstances would very naturally be regarded as foreigners just arrived on the coast."

The Plate represents a male, a female, and a brood of young, of the size of life. The plants are the Common Heath (*Erica cinerea*) and the Harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*).