

In my work on the birds of Asia will be found a full account of the two birds mentioned as having been recently introduced into the British Islands, namely *P. versicolor* from Japan, and *P. torquatus* from Southern China, together with several other species of this beautiful group of birds, respecting which it is only necessary to mention here that they nearly all inhabit the northern part of that great land-section of the globe called Asia, and that none of them are found in India.

Of all the true Pheasants the *P. colchicus* in a pure state is the darkest in colour, and may be always recognized by the deep chestnut hue of its rump, a dark green stripe over each eye, and the uniform redness of its flank-feathers; the Chinese *P. torquatus* is conspicuous for the light silvery green mark over each eye, the glaucous green of its rump, and the light buff colouring of its flank-feathers; while the Japanese bird, with its splendid green breast and sides, differs materially from both. The birds usually shot in our woods exhibit an intermixture of all these tints and markings, no two being precisely alike.

As an evidence that the same colours in cross-bred birds cannot be perpetuated I append two notes which I find among my MSS. bearing upon this point.

“Burdett, the clever keeper of the Earl of Craven, informs me that a Pheasant which had a narrow ring round its neck the first year had a very broad one during the second, and that in the third it had totally disappeared. ‘I am positive of this,’ he says, ‘as it was never taken out of the pen in which it was kept.’”

“Mr. J. H. Gurney bred some extremely beautiful first-cross birds between a Green Pheasant, obtained at the Earl of Derby’s sale, and the species common in his woods at North Repps, in Norfolk; and although they appeared to be extremely healthy, and some of them exceeding four pounds in weight, the race could not be perpetuated, Mr. Gurney assuring me that after an interval of a few years there was no strain of the green bird left.”

On this head too, Mr. Stevenson, in his ‘Birds of Norfolk,’ has the following passage:—“From personal observation and inquiry, however, during the last two or three years, it appears that evidences of this cross, even in the coverts where these hybrids were most plentiful, are now scarcely perceptible, the strong characteristics of the Chinese bird apparently absorbing all the less-marked, though darker, tints of the Japanese. One of these birds, killed in 1853, weighed upwards of four and a half pounds; and many examples which were stuffed for the beauty of their plumage will be found in the collections of our county gentlemen.”

The accompanying illustration represents an old and true *Phasianus colchicus*, which has met with a fate to which hundreds of its brethren are annually subjected.