

10. *ATHENE PARDALOTA*, n. sp.

I was about to set this small species down as *A. brodii*, Burton, to which it is very closely allied, when Mr. Gurney drew my attention to the dark spots that mark its flanks. Two pairs were brought to me from the forest-country. The sexes appeared to be coloured alike, the females, as usual in *Raptores*, being somewhat larger.

The bills of both sexes, when fresh, were light greenish yellow, patched on the sides with blackish; legs greenish flesh-colour; claws light brown, with black edges and tips. The tail consists of twelve feathers of nearly equal length, with angular tips. The measurements in inches are—

	Length.	Wing.	Tail.
Male	5	3	2
Female	6	4	2½

In *A. brodii* the three first rectrices only are cut out slightly on the inner webs; in ours the four first quills are very deeply indented. In the style of colouring the two species much resemble one another, but ours is at once distinguishable by the large black spots that ornament its white flanks.

Head olive-brown, spotted and barred with ochreous; a broad buff collar reaches from one shoulder to the other, with a large black spot on each side near the scapulars; rest of the upper parts a rich yellowish olive-brown, barred with buff and blackish, many of the scapulars below the surface-feathers being spotted with large white spots; quills hair-brown, some of the inner primaries and all the inner quills being tipped and spotted on their exterior webs with reddish buff; tail rich brown, tipped with buff, both webs of each feather having corresponding transverse spots of the same colour, which thus form five disunited bars across the tail, there being also an indistinct one at the base of the feathers (in *A. brodii* the caudal bars number seven, without counting the extreme basal one or the marginal one at the tips); lore and eyebrow white, the former giving forth stiff bristles, white at their bases, then black, attenuated, and often terminating in yellowish tips; chin, lower neck, and space under the auriculars white; breast and sides banded

with black, whitish, and buff; belly, vent, and lower flanks white, the latter spotted with black; legs feathered to the foot, yellowish brown, banded with deep brown, except on the front of the tarsi, which is white; carpus and under wing-coverts lemon-coloured, the latter marked with blackish brown. As the bird attains to maturity, the buff markings on the head and lower parts become white, and the rich reddish tinge of the upper parts deepens into a deep olive-brown.

On a late visit to Leyden, Prof. Schlegel showed me another small *Athene* from Sumatra, also closely allied to *A. brodii*. This species, of which the Leyden Museum contained only one specimen, entirely wanted the buff shoulder-collar. It bore the name of *A. sylvatica*, Müller*.

Our little Owl is quite a forest bird, frequenting the wooded mountain-ranges of the interior. I never met with it alive, and therefore regret to say that I have no note on its habits.

11. *SCOPS SEMITORQUES*, Schleg. Faun. Japon. t. 8.

Sc. lettia, Hodgs.

A fine female example of this bird, and the only one I procured in Formosa, was brought to me on the 1st of April from the interior hills. It also occurs at Foochow, whence I have received numerous examples. The Foochow bird has been identified by Mr. Blyth as *Scops lempiji*, Horsf.; but then that gentlemen had probably only compared it with Himalayan specimens; and Prof. Schlegel assures me that all the skins he has seen from Hindostan are referable to *S. semitorques*, and not to *S. lempiji*, which is confined to Java and the Indian Archipelago. On a trip into the interior, near Tamsuy, I observed one of this species in the dusk of the evening. It flew out of a pine tree on to the roof of a low native house, and then, ruffling up its feathers, kept stretching forth its head and hooting. Its cries resembled the syllables *hoó-hoúat*, the first pronounced sharp and quick, the latter hoarsely and with more stress. In the dead silence of the night these sounds were rather startling, and might easily be understood to have a portent of evil by the unsophisticated mind. The Chinese, as most other partially civilized people, regard the Owl as a bird of ill omen, and dread

* [See Bp. Consp. p. 40.—ED.]