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The Monographic Literature of the Galliformes

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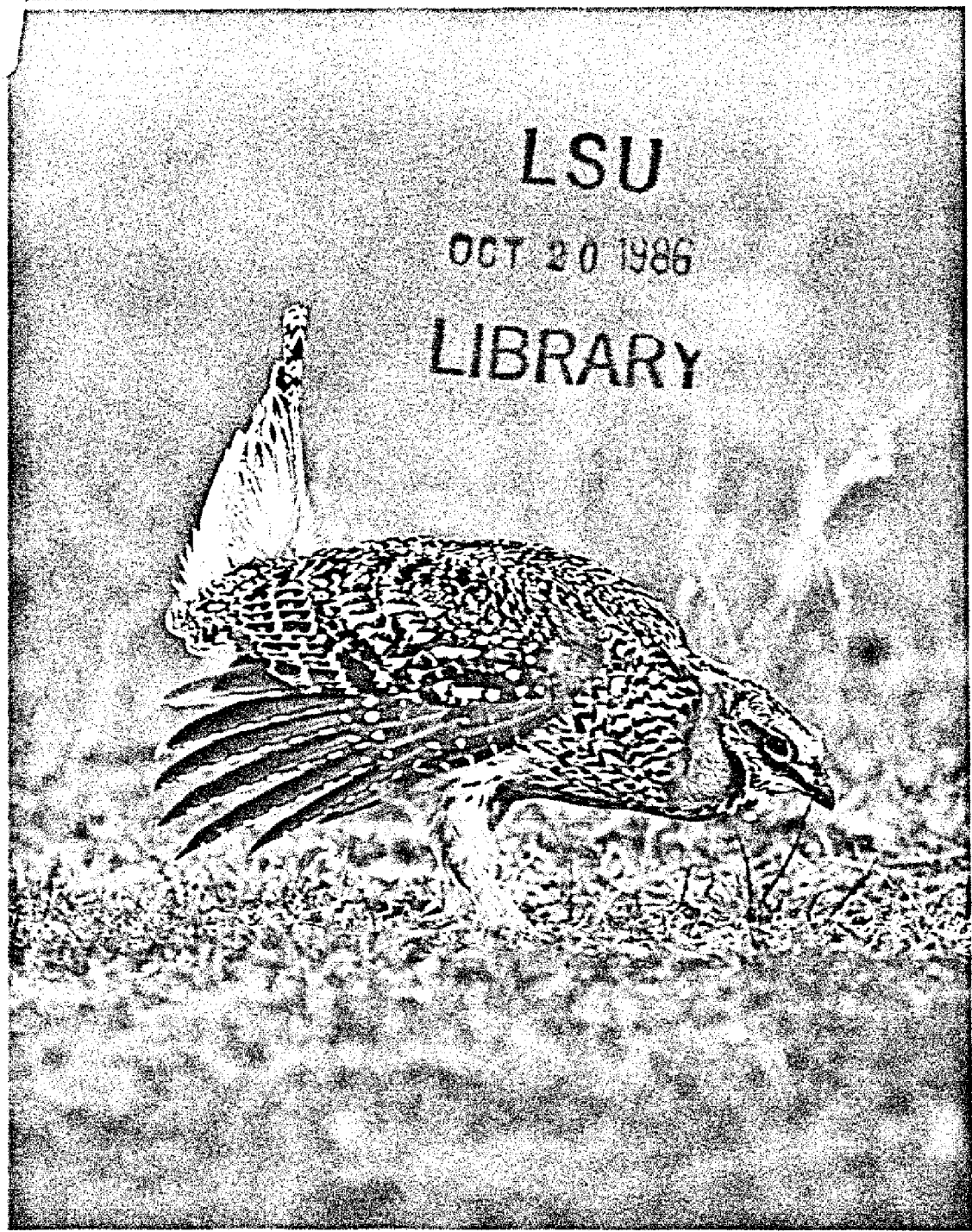
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THE WORLD PHEASANT ASSOCIATION
JOURNAL XI
1985 - 1986

THE MONOGRAPHIC LITERATURE OF THE GALLIFORMES

PAUL A. JOHNSGARD

Because of their extraordinarily diverse beauty and importance as sporting birds, pheasants and their relatives have been the subjects of many of the world's finest ornithological books, some of which also rank as among the most valuable from a book-collector's viewpoint. It is the purpose of this brief review to mention some of the landmark books or technical monographs dealing with major groups of Galliformes, both from the standpoints of their informational contents and their relative availability or collector's value. Emphasis is placed on English-language publications, although a few important recent German publications are mentioned.

Probably any review of galliform books should begin with that of D.G. Elliot, a wealthy American ornithologist who spent about 10 years in England, where he began his work on the first of two major ornithological monographs. This book, titled a *Monograph of the Phasianidae, or family of the pheasants*, was published by Elliot himself in New York (1872) in an extremely limited large folio edition of two volumes, each consisting of only 50 subscribed copies. It included 79 hand-colored reproductions of watercolor paintings by Joseph Wolf, the foremost bird artist of the day, and converted to lithographs primarily by J.G. Keulemans. Joseph Wolf, who also illustrated Elliot's later monograph on the birds of paradise, had already established himself as the foremost bird artist of the time through his collaboration with John Gould on the latter's famous monographs on the birds of Asia and the birds of Great Britain and for his numerous illustrations done for the Zoological Society of London over a period of several decades. It is this series of magnificent plates, perhaps the finest ever done of pheasants, that places the Elliot monograph into a special category of its own, despite that the text is largely limited to plumage descriptions, brief summaries of now-outdated distributional information and taxonomic synonymies. Because of the extreme scarcity of the volumes, they only rarely reach the market, but in recent years they have been listed by rare book dealers for about £20,000-25,000. A selection of 12 of these plates was published in large folio size in 1979 by the Ariel Press of London, under the

title *The birds of Daniel Giraud Elliot (A selection of pheasants and peacocks)*, edited by Adrian Thorpe in an edition limited to 1000 copies at £42. Elliot also produced a much less well known imperial folio-sized volume on the grouse in 1864-65, which he also privately published in New York under the title *A monograph of the Tetraonidae or family of the grouse*. Two of the 27 hand-colored plates are by Joseph Wolf, two more (of eggs) are by William S. Morgan and the rest are by Elliot himself. Judging from the indicated number (71) of subscribed copies, the total press run was probably of less than 100, making it one of the very rare galliform monographs, but compared with the pheasant book, the generally inferior quality of the plates has made the volume much less appreciated. The text contents are very similar to those described for the pheasant volume. This book only rarely appears for sale, but one copy was recently listed at £7250.

During this same general period John Gould published his book on the New World quails, titled *A monograph of the Odontophorinae or Partridges of America*. Like his other monographs of the time, it was done in imperial folio, and it contained 32 hand-colored lithographs published (starting in 1844) in three parts, which were completed in 1850. The total press run was probably less than 150, since in 1873 Gould listed 143 owners of this work. The text consists mostly of characterizations of the genera, together with some descriptive notes on each species. The initial drawings were done by Gould himself and were later converted to lithographic plates by H.C. Richter. They illustrate all but seven of the currently accepted species of New World quails, with *Rynchortyx* and six species of *Odontophorus* lacking. Nonetheless, the book provides the only currently available color plates for some of the *Odontophorus* forms. Few examples have come on the market in recent years, but one copy was recently listed at £4,000. Currently Dr. Gordon Sauer (an authority on Gould who provided some of this information) and the writer are attempting to arrange for publication of a semi-facsimile edition of this historically important volume with updated biological information and new biographical information relating to Gould's work on the subject.

Although highly specialized and now badly outdated, W.R. Ogilvie-Grant's *Catalogue of the game birds... in the collection of the British Museum*, published in 1893, should be mentioned here. It is volume 22 of the series produced by the British Museum (Natural History) and is absolutely unrivaled as a historic source of information on the galliform birds. One of the other major references of the late 1800s is A. O. Hume and C.H.T. Marshall's *The game birds of India, Burma and Ceylon*, a three-volume royal octavo set with 144 colored lithographs, which was

published in 1879-1881. This set now sells for about £200. It was followed by E.C.S. Baker's *The game-birds of India, Burma and Ceylon*, published 1921-1930 by John Bale & Son, London. It is also in three volumes, and has 60 colored plates by Henrik Gronvold. The set is sometimes available from book dealers at about £250.

By the turn of the century, the era of sumptuous limited-edition monographs was over, and mass-production printing techniques replaced it. The book that marks both the beginning of the modern period and, in a sense, its high-water mark, is William Beebe's *A monograph of the pheasants*. This consists of four folio volumes published by H.F. Witherbys of London for the New York Zoological Society between 1918 and 1922, in an edition of 600 copies. There is a total of 90 colored plates by Archibald Thorburn, George Lodge, H. Gronvold, Charles R. Knight, Louis Fuertes, and Maj. Henry Jones. There are also 20 distribution maps and 88 photogravure plates. In contrast to the previously mentioned monographs the text represents a major contribution to an understanding of the biology of pheasants, and involved 8 years of research and preparation. The four-volume set sold originally for \$250, and in recent years generally has been selling in the neighborhood of £1500-1600. When the first edition was exhausted, a shortened quarto edition, titled *Pheasants: their lives and homes*, was published in New York by the New York Zoological Society and Doubleday, Page & Co. in 1926. A deluxe edition of 201 copies in slipcases also was made available. A subsequent single-volume version of the same book appeared in 1936 (New York) and in 1938 (with a London imprint). In these shorter versions there are only 32 colored and 32 halftone plates, and some of the paintings shown in color in the original edition are reproduced as halftones. The 300-page text consists almost entirely of natural history information and excludes the more technical materials of the original monograph. Copies of the two-volume set usually sell for about \$100 or £80 (the deluxe edition about double this amount), while the single-volume printing is slightly cheaper.

Following Beebe's epic monograph, there was nothing of great general significance published on pheasants until Jean Delacour produced his book titled *The pheasants of the world* in 1951. This book, published by Country Life Ltd. of London, marked the culmination of Delacour's life-long interest in pheasants and includes 16 colored and 16 halftone plates by J.C. Harrison, illustrating adults of all of the 49 species of pheasants and the downy young of 19. Most of the text is devoted to plumage descriptions of all the subspecies recognized by Delacour, keys, and accounts of the birds in the wild and in captivity. A slightly revised printing of the first edition was published in 1957, and at least four printings were produced through 1965.

In 1977 a more extensively revised second edition (with an additional color plate by R. David Digby) was published by the World Pheasant Association and Spur Publications, including a limited edition of 100 copies bound in morocco, signed by Delacour, and with a separate hand-colored etching by T. J. Greenwood. Copies of the first edition generally sell from £65-95, depending on the printing and book condition, while the second edition is still available from book dealers. In 1982 the third impression of the second edition was published, and a French edition also has been recently produced.

The North American galliform species were first comprehensively, if popularly, treated by D.G. Elliot in his *Game birds of North America*, but were not adequately covered until 1932, in A.C. Bent's *Life histories of North American gallinaceous birds*, published as a U.S. National Museum Bulletin (162) and the ninth volume in that memorable series. Like the others, it is a wonderful source of information on natural history, plumages, ranges, and nesting biology. Although copies of the original edition are often difficult to locate and usually sell for about \$30 or £25, an inexpensive softback reprint by Dover Publications of New York is easily obtainable.

The first book dealing with the New World quails to follow Bent's was Johnsgard's *Grouse and Quails of North America*, published in 1973 by the University of Nebraska Press and covering all the 14 species of odontophorine quails occurring north of the Mexico-Guatemala border. It included 52 color plates, most of which are photographs, and as of 1985 is still in print. The same book covers all of the North American species of grouse, which had not previously been dealt with collectively, although individual volumes on several species had appeared. Among these was R. Patterson's excellent volume *The sage grouse in Wyoming*, published by Sage Books of Denver in 1952, and the superb book titled *The ruffed grouse: life history, propagation, management*, edited by G. Bump and others and published by the New York State Conservation Department in 1947. A private reprinting of Bump's ruffed grouse monograph also appeared in the late 1970s. (While not specifically identified as a reprint, it can be readily recognized as such by its monochrome rather than colored frontispiece and the misspelled "propagation" on the cover.) A semi-popular version of this book, called *The ruffed grouse, its life story, ecology and management*, was produced by F.C. Edminster in 1947 and was published by Macmillan, New York.

The red grouse was exhaustively treated in *The grouse in health and disease* produced in 1911 by the British committee of inquiry on grouse disease. Originally published as a two-volume treatise, in 1912 it was

reprinted in an abridged and less technical single-volume format. I have seen the single-volume version advertised recently at \$45, and the two-volume set sells for about £80.

H.L. Stoddard's classic *The bobwhite quail: its habits, preservation, and increase*, was published in 1931 by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. It represents the most famous publication on that species, and copies of the first printing now sell for up to \$225, while somewhat later printings sell for \$100 or more. A special deluxe edition of 260 copies, signed by the author and with a bound-in etching by Frank Benson, sells for up to \$1000. An unchanged reprinting of this book was done by Scribner's in 1978. A more recent book, *The bobwhite quail: its life and management*, by W. Rosene, was published in 1969 by Rutgers University Press. A somewhat different classic, C.W. Schwartz's *The prairie chicken in Missouri*, was produced by the Missouri Conservation Department in 1944, and is a beautifully produced photographic essay of this species. Copies can sometimes be found for about \$80-90. The ring-necked pheasant was treated in *The ring-necked pheasant and its management in North America*, edited by W.L. McAtee and produced by The American Wildlife Institute in 1945. Several other new and important single-species books on North America grouse and quails have appeared in the past few years. These include W.L. Robinson's *Fool hen: the spruce grouse on the Yellow Dog Plains*, published in 1980 by the University of Wisconsin Press, and A.S. Leopold's *The California quail*, published in the same year by the University of California Press. In 1983 two new population-oriented books on the bobwhite appeared, including V.W. Lehmann's *Bobwhites in the Rio grande plain of Texas* (Texas A. & M. Press) and J.L. Roseberry and W.D. Klimstra's *Population ecology of the bobwhite* (Southern Illinois Press).

Although perhaps too technical and taxonomically oriented for the average reader, the publication in 1946 of Part X of *The birds of North and Middle America*, as Bulletin 50 of the United States National Museum, covering all of the New World Galliformes, deserves brief mention here, as it is invaluable for its bibliographic information, keys, and plumage descriptions. Copies of this government publication (with softback wrappers) sometimes appear in the lists of book dealers at about \$15-20.

In a slightly different category is the important reference source edited by U.N. Glutz von Blotzheim, and the fifth volume in the series *Handbuch der Vogel Mitteleuropas*, published in 1973 by Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft of Frankfurt. Although in German, it is perhaps the best single source of information on the 13 native or introduced species of European Galliformes. This monograph initially retailed in West Germany for 112 marks, but at least in North America is extremely difficult to obtain.

Even more useful to most readers, although somewhat less comprehensive in its individual species coverage, is volume II of the *Handbook of the birds of the Middle East and North Africa*, published in 1980 by Oxford University Press, which includes 6 species of grouse, 18 species of typical phasianids, as well as 1 species each of guineafowl and turkey. This latter book is still in print and currently sells for about £45. A few other very useful German monographs in the "neue Brehm Bucherei" series might be mentioned here in passing. These include *Die Perlhühner*, on guineafowl, by H. von Boetticher, published in 1954; *Ohrphasanen*, on the eared pheasants, by J. Felix, published in 1964; *Der Kongofau*, on the Congo peafowl, by W.N. Verheyen, published in 1965; *Das Rebhuhn* on the gray partridge, by R. Dwenger and published in 1973; *Das Haselhuhn*, on the hazel grouse, published in 1978 and written by H. Bergman and others; and a review of the ptarmigans, *Die Schneehühner*, by E. O Hohn, that was published in 1980. A similar volume on the two species of capercaillies is reportedly forthcoming. These small softback books, published inexpensively in East Germany (by A. Ziemsen Verlag of Wittenberg Lutherstadt), are virtually impossible to obtain in North America. In a similar mini-monograph category, although a larger hardback book with color illustrations, is J. Bergmann's *The peafowl of the world*, published in 1979 by Saiga Press, which is largely aviculturally oriented.

Only a single volume covering the Cracidae has been published to date, but what a volume it is! This book, *Curassows and related birds*, by Jean Delacour and Dean Amadon, was published (at a substantially subsidized price of \$20) by the American Museum of Natural History in 1973. It is especially notable for its authoritative text and its 29 marvellous color plates by A.E. Gilbert, D. Reid-Henry, and the late G.M. Sutton. It only recently went out of print, but like-new copies can still sometimes be found for \$25-35, making it easily one of the "best buys" in contemporary ornithological literature.

Several books have been published on the biology and management of the wild turkey, although none has dealt comprehensively with both species of this aberrant galliform family. The two books of primary relevance are *The wild turkey and its management*, edited by O.H. Hewitt, and published in 1967 by The Wildlife Society, Washington, D.C., and the more inclusive *The wild turkey: its history and domestication* by A.W. Schorger, published in 1966 by the University of Oklahoma Press. Both books are now out of print and difficult to locate. Likewise, the megapodes have not been comprehensively dealt with, but the doctoral dissertation by G.A. Clark, Jr. ("Ontogeny and evolution in the megapodes", Yale University, 1964) is the most useful single reference on the group. A shortened version of this work

appeared in *The Living Bird* 3:149-168, 1964. Additionally, H.J. Frith has monographed the remarkable life history of the mallee-fowl (*The mallee-fowl* Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1962).

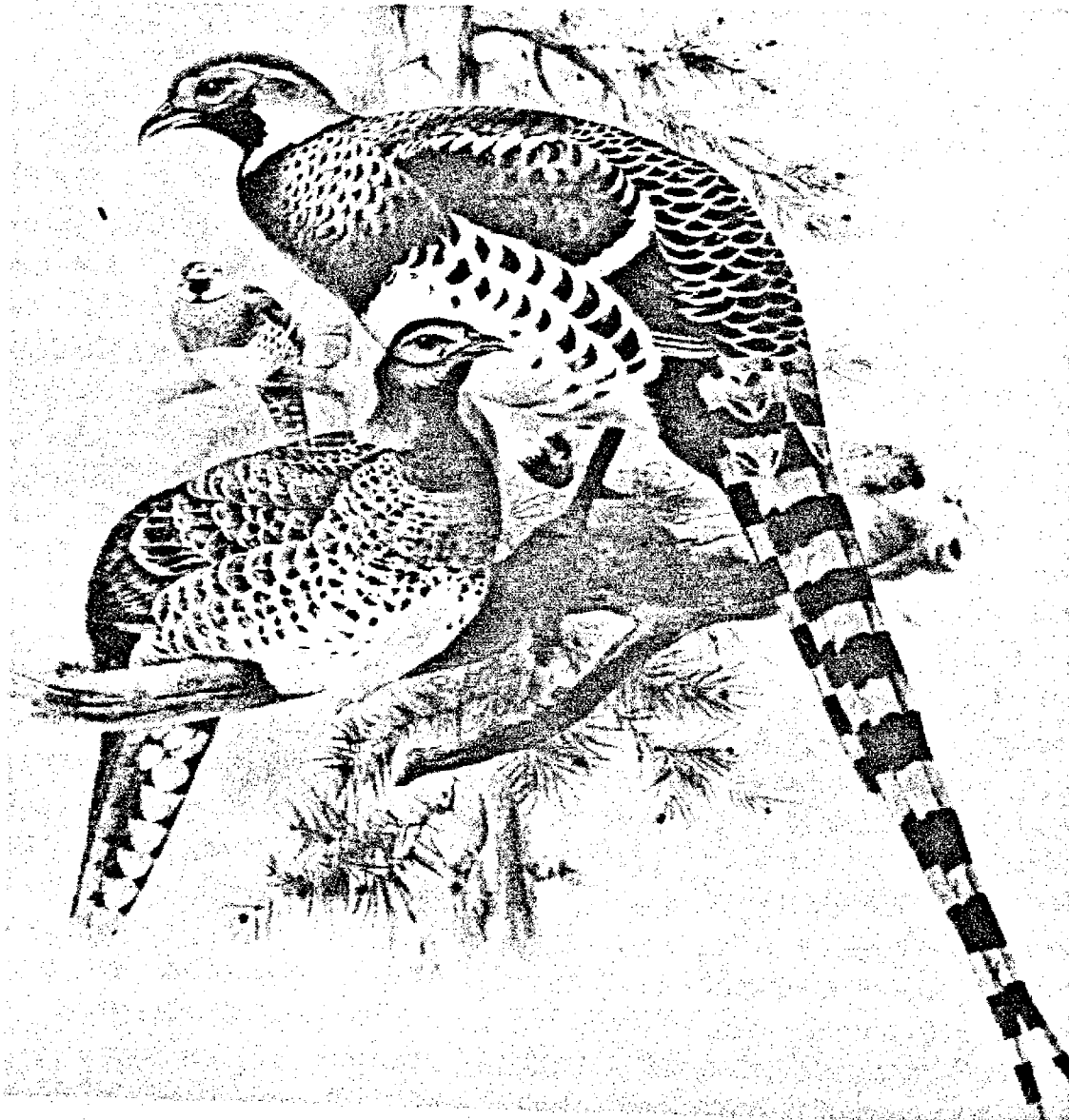
Very recently released is Johnsgard's *The grouse of the world*, published by the University of Nebraska Press in 1983, and representing the first coverage of this entire galliform group since Elliot's monograph of more than a century ago. It includes 51 color plates, most of which are photographs. Regrettably, there is no comparable book yet available for the guinea-fowl, nor any for the other major group of primarily African galliforms, the francolins. The forthcoming publication (scheduled for fall of 1985) of volume II of *The birds of Africa*, by Academic Press, should go far to fill these gaps, but until that time two important journal monographs are the most useful publications on these groups. These are B.P. Hall's "The francolins, a study in speciation", *Bulletin of the British Museum of Natural History (Zoology)* 10:105-204, 1963, and T.M. Crowe's "The evolution of guinea-fowl (Galliformes, Phasianidae, Numidinae) taxonomy, phylogeny, speciation and biogeography," in *Annales of the South African Museum* 76(2)43-136, 1978. Both deal primarily with taxonomic, distributional and evolutionary problems rather than with comparative biologies. The useful book by P.A. Clancey, *Gamebirds of Southern Africa*, published in 1967 by American Elsevier Publishing Co., New York, includes descriptive accounts for 2 species of guinea-fowl and 15 species of Old World quails and francolins.

By and large, the Old World francolins, quails and partridges (which collectively number slightly over 100 species) have so far largely been overlooked by ornithologists, and no comprehensive taxonomic or biological surveys of these groups are yet available. The small book *Odontophorinae and Perdicinae of the World* by N. Kuroda, published by the Ornithological Society of Japan in 1970 is one of the very few comprehensive sources of information on these groups, while the recent book *Partridges, their breeding and management* by G.E.S. Robbins (Boydell & Brewster, 1984) covers 43 species, primarily from the avicultural standpoint. A similar book, *Quail, their breeding and management*, by the same author and published in 1981 by the World Pheasant Association, deals with 14 Old World quails and all 30 New World quails, the two books thus collectively leaving only the francolins untouched. Currently, research on the evolution and systematics of the Old World phasianids is being done by G.W.H. Davison, who informed me (in litt, October, 1983) that he hopes eventually to publish a book on this subject.

A new review of the biology of the typical pheasants, titled *Pheasants of the World* has very recently been published by Oxford University Press, with

text by the writer and more than 50 color reproductions of previously unpublished watercolors (from the collection of the Zoological Society of London) by the late Maj. Henry Jones, plus two new plates by Timothy J. Greenwood. Its purpose is to provide a synthesis of the comparative biology of pheasants and a greater coverage of the ecology, behaviour and status of pheasants under natural conditions than is offered by Jean Delacour's great Monograph. It is thus intended to be complementary to Delacour's book rather than to replace it, and therefore very little avicultural information is included.

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Elliot's Pheasants from *A Monograph of the Phasianidae* by Daniel Giraud Elliot, [1870]-1872.