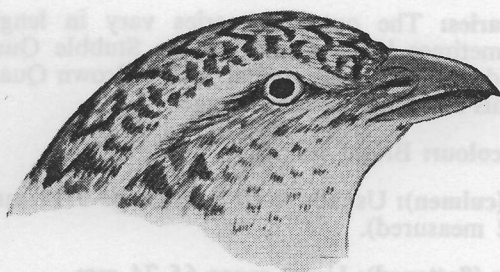


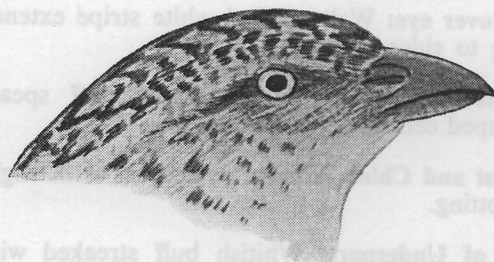
BIRD IN THE HAND

Females Of The Australian 'True Quail', Phasianidae (Quail with hind toes).

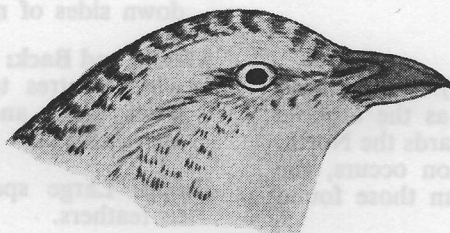
by H. J. de S. Disney and Drawings by Sondra Beresford, Australian Museum, Sydney.



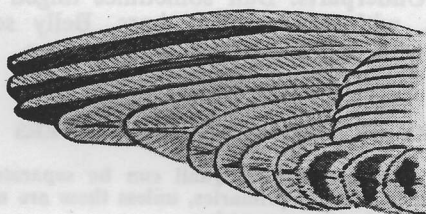
FEMALE STUBBLE QUAIL



FEMALE BROWN QUAIL



FEMALE KING QUAIL



STUBBLE QUAIL



BROWN QUAIL

STUBBLE QUAIL (*Coturnix pectoralis*)

Female

Length: 7-7½ inches (180-185 mm).

Primaries: Outer two equal in length and the next almost the same length (this applies with the male also).

Leg colour: Fleshy white.

Bill (culmen): Usually 12 mm (range 10-13; 20 measured).

Wing (flattened): Usual range 99-105 mm.

Line over eye: Well marked white stripe extending to sides of neck.

Mantle and Back: Large creamy buff spear-shaped centres to feathers.

Throat and Chin: Whitish, sometimes with slight spotting.

Rest of Underparts Whitish buff streaked with dark brown.

BROWN QUAIL (*Synoicus australis*)

Female

Length: 6-8 inches (152-203 mm). In Southern Australia, about the same size as the Stubble Quail, but the size decreases towards the North. In New Guinea, similar variation occurs, the lowland birds being smaller than those found at higher altitudes.

Primaries: First four primaries nearly equal, and the next one slightly shorter (this applies with the male also).

Leg colour: Yellow.

Bill (culmen): Usually 13 mm (range 12-14 mm, 11 measured).

Wing (flattened): Usual range 91-101 mm (Australia), 82-103 mm (New Guinea).

Line over eye: Indistinct pale to deep buff stripe with dark brown spots extending down sides of neck.

Mantle and Back: White centre shafts to feathers with large 'square' black spots and narrower pale rufous bars.

Throat and Chin: Whitish buff.

Rest of Underparts: Buff with dark brown bars each side of narrow white shaft.

KING QUAIL (*Excalfactoria chinensis*)

Female

Length: 4½-5 inches (108-127 mm).

Primaries: The outer primaries vary in length sometimes being similar to the Stubble Quail and at other times similar to the Brown Quail. This maybe a question of age.

Leg colour: Bright yellow.

Bill (culmen): Usually 9-10 mm (range 9-11 mm; 12 measured).

Wing (flattened): Usual range 65-74 mm.

The plumage pattern of the upper and under parts of the female King Quail is similar to that of the Brown Quail.

Line over eye: Broad rufous buff line extending down sides of neck.

Mantle and Back: Similar to Brown Quail; creamy white centres to feathers with large 'square' black spots and narrow rufous bars. These characters are rather variable.

Rump: Large spear-shaped buff cream centres to feathers.

Throat: Pale rufous.

Chin: Whitish, tinged rufous.

Rest of Underparts: Buff sometimes tinged with rufous, with strong black bars. Belly sometimes with and sometimes without bars.

SUMMARY OF DIAGNOSTIC CHARACTERS

The Stubble and Brown Quail can be separated by the difference in outer primaries, unless these are moulting, and also by the eye stripe.

Brown and King Quail can be separated by size and by the line over the eye.