The Tetrax in Athenaeus

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THREE DESCRIPTIONS of a bird called *tetrax* occur in Greek and Latin literature. Two are found in Athenaeus, and it is with these that this paper is concerned. One description is his own (9.398F–399A); the other is a quotation from Alexander of Myndus (9.398D).[1] The third forms the whole of a Latin fragment *De Aucupio* I, which is dubiously ascribed to Nemesianus[2] and presents special problems, since the poem's very antiquity is questionable.[3]

The two descriptions related by Athenaeus are distinctly different; so much so that they have never been reconciled. Yet both are on good authority and are remarkably vivid and complete, although Athenaeus' is perplexing for it does not accurately portray any bird, while Alexander's is ambiguous and may be interpreted as any of several species. Still, because the same name is applied to both, there ought to be some relationship between them.

[1] Fr.20 in M. Wellmann, "Alexander von Myndos," *Hermes* 26 (1891) 552.

[2] F. Capponi, "Il tetrax ed il tarax di Nemesiano," *Latomus* 21 (1962) 572–615, attempted to show that here the tetrax is a Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*). *Cf.* J. André, *Les noms d'oiseaux en Latin* (Paris 1967) 152–53 (hereafter cited ANDRÉ). The physical description indicates that this is so, but the method by which it is hunted and its habitat are not consonant with this bird. See R. T. Peterson, *Field Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe*[2] (Cambridge [Mass.] 1967) 114ff; Xen. *An.* 1.5.2. Plin. 10.(22)29 states that the bird does not have a Latin name. This suggests that the Great Bustard was never native to central Italy. Capponi's testimonia are incomplete, and a quotation from Eust. 1205.27 which he falsely ascribes (p.572) to an anonymous author is, in fact, a paraphrase of Ath. 9.398F. Eustathius frequently cites Athenaeus (see G. Kaibel, *Athenaei Naucratitae Dipnosophistarum* [Leipzig 1887; repr. Stuttgart 1965] *Praef.* 14).

[3] W. S. Teuffel, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur*[5] (Leipzig 1890) 2.978 (§ 386.3) states, "Sie sind wohl ein Erzeugnis der neueren Zeit." M. Schanz/C. Hosius, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur* (Munich 1922) 3.33ff, term it "verdächtig." E. W. Martin, *The Birds of the Latin Poets* (Stanford 1914) 207, states that "both fragments seem curiously late in tone and viewpoint." M. Ihm unconvincingly cites instances of classical parallels as an argument for its authenticity (*RhM* 52 [1897] 454ff). The fragment is first found in G. Longolius, *Dialogus de avibus* (Cologne 1544) E2[a]. Editions are J. C. Wernsdorf, *PLM* (Paris 1824–26) 1.182; M. Haupt, *Ovid. Hal.* (Leipzig 1838) 56; A. Riese, *AL* (Leipzig 1894; repr. Amsterdam 1964) no.885; E. Bährens, *PLM* (Leipzig 1879–83) 3.203–04; J. Postgate, *CPL* (London 1894–1905) 2.572; J. Duff, *Minor Latin Poets* (London 1935) 512–15.

The approach to the problem of identifying the tetrax has always been based upon a traditional interpretation of the text and the attempt to match a known bird to it.[4] Never has the soundness of the text been questioned (I speak of Ath. 9.398F–399A in particular), nor has anyone demonstrated that some part of it could be differently translated. This course of investigation will be pursued on the following pages. D'Arcy W. Thompson (see n.4) is by far the most weighty authority. Yet Thompson was uncertain in his statements concerning the identity of the bird and thought that Athenaeus was speaking of as many as three different birds under this name, while Athenaeus thought that there were two—the one described by Alexander of

[4] Seven birds have been equated with the tetrax, not always with a particular description in mind. The following are the most noteworthy: Linnaeus, after Alexander of Myndus, identified the tetrax with the Little Bustard. Thus *Otis tetrax* L., *Systema Naturae*[10] (Stockholm 1758) 1.154; *cf.* D'Arcy W. Thompson, *A Glossary of Greek Birds* (Oxford 1936; repr. Hildesheim 1966) 283 (hereafter cited THOMPSON). The Great Bustard is supported by F. Capponi, *loc.cit.* (*supra* n.2) for *De Aucupio*; *cf.* André, *loc.cit.* A Guinea-fowl is advanced by Thompson 282–83 for Ath. 9.398F, but he also suggests a Black Grouse. Thompson thinks that the tetrax in *De Aucupio* is a Hazel-grouse (*Tetrastes bonasia*). The Black Grouse is also guessed by C. C. Felton, *The Birds of Aristophanes* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1849) 178 (*s.v.* HEATHCOCK, *OED*); C. D. Yonge, *The Deipnosophistae* (London 1854) 628–29. G. Longolius, *loc.cit.* (*supra* n.3) for what it is worth, believed the bird in *De Aucupio* I illustrated the *urogallus* (Capercaillie); *sic* B. B. Rogers, *Ar. Birds* (London 1906) 122, translates Capercaillie on line 883; *cf.* André, *loc.cit.*; O. Keller, *Die antike Tierwelt* (Leipzig 1909–13; repr. Hildesheim 1963) 2.165–66; J. Schweighäuser, *Athenaei . . . Deipnosophistarum libri quindecim* (Strassburg 1801–07) 10.201ff. A recent seventh conjecture, the Houbara Bustard (*Chlamydotis undulata*), by S. Benton, "Cattle Egrets and Bustards in Greek Art," *JHS* 81 (1961) 51–52, is baseless, and displays a superficial approach to the problem and the evidence. The description in Ath. 9.398F cannot be ascribed to Aristophanes Byzantius, for whom Miss Benton gives no reference (see A. Nauck, *Aristophanes Byzantii . . . Fragmenta* [Halle 1848; repr. Hildesheim 1963]). She rightly rejects Thompson's guess that the bird is a Guinea-fowl, but for the wrong reason. Guinea-fowl *do* have wattles, and Thompson is not referring to the crest. She further chooses to neglect Athenaeus' statement (as has Capponi) that the bird has the appearance of a Purple Gallinule. The Purple Gallinule looks nothing like a bustard. That Aelius Dionysius (*ap.* Eust. 1278.50) calls the cock's tail-feathers κάλλαια by no means proves that neck feathers either were or can be called by this name. Elsewhere κάλλαια never means tail-feathers, and they must originate on the cock in the same general area as they do on the tetrax (*i.e.* at the ears), or the ambiguity of κάλλαια would make the sentence unintelligible. See *infra* in my narrative.

Miss Benton's argument that the *tetrao(n)* (Plin. 10.[22]29) is a Great Bustard is equally groundless. Thompson (now supported by André, *op.cit. s.v.* TETRAON) is dead right. The two descriptions given by Pliny are in perfect accord with the male Black Grouse and the Capercaillie. The red eye-brows are characteristic of Grouse, and Linnaeus, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.4) 159, called the two *Tetrao tetrix* (now generally referred to as *Lyrurus tetrix*) and *Tetrao urogallus*, respectively: see n.14 *infra*. On the size, Miss Benton has a point. Pliny exaggerates it somewhat, but that is all. The Capercaillie is nearly the size of a turkey, and larger than nearly all European birds. *Cf.* Peterson, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 104.

Myndus being another and an uncertain species which will be treated separately later in this paper.

The bird the host Larensis saw in Moesia and which was also native to Paeonia (9.398E) Thompson took to be a grouse, hinting on the basis of a citation from Plin. 10.(22)29 that it is a Black Grouse (*Lyrurus tetrix*). Nevertheless Thompson concluded that there was a difference between the bird he thought Larensis saw in Moesia and the one brought into the banquet at Rome (9.398F–399A). He did not explain this discrepancy, which ought not to exist since the birds are supposed to be the same. He assumed instead that what was at first described as a Black Grouse was later illustrated by some other bird of uncertain identity. Thompson then assigned the latter to an unknown species of Guinea-fowl. But Athenaeus specifically states that only one bird is in question, and there is no reason to assume that Athenaeus could not distinguish a Black Grouse from a Guinea-fowl, which he describes elsewhere in great detail.[5]

The description of the bird displayed by Larensis is as follows (Ath. 9.398F–399A): *ἦν δὲ τὸ μὲν μέγεθος ὑπὲρ ἀλεκτρυόνα τὸν μέγιστον, τὸ δὲ εἶδος πορφυρίωνι παραπλήσιος· καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ὤτων ἑκατέρωθεν εἶχε κρεμάμενα ὥσπερ οἱ ἀλεκτρυόνες τὰ κάλλαια· βαρεῖα δ' ἦν ἡ φωνή. θαυμασάντων οὖν ἡμῶν τὸ εὐανθὲς τοῦ ὄρνιθος . . .*

The tetrax brought into the banquet is said to have been "larger than the largest cock[6] and similar to the *πορφυρίων* in appearance."[7] Thompson (pp.252–53) identifies the *πορφυρίων* as the Purple Gallinule or Waterhen (*Porphyrio veterum*, Gm.; *P. coeruleus*, Vandelli, or its close relatives).[8] These birds are of distinctive coloration, and as the

[5] Clytus of Miletus *ap.* Ath. 14.655C–F (*FGrHist* 490 F 1) gives a remarkably accurate description.

[6] The size of the ancient cock is attested by Ath. 9.394A and Arist. *HA* 617b25, who state that it is the size of a Wood Pigeon and a Woodcock, respectively. See Thompson 34.

[7] *εἶδος* refers to the color rather than the size, which is already accounted for. The description parallels that of Alexander of Myndus in 9.398D. *Cf.* 399A, where *εὐανθές* is well applied to the Purple Gallinule, but of the large birds suggested for the tetrax, only the male Black Grouse, the male Capercaillie, or the Guinea-fowl are suited to it. The other birds are of very dull coloration. For *εἶδος*=color, see Hdt. 3.107.

[8] There are a number of very similar species found throughout the world. It is not likely that the ancients distinguished between the few they knew. The Purple Gallinule is especially abundant in Greece and the Greek islands. Precisely which species an ancient writer would have meant may depend in part upon the geographical context. The Purple Gallinule is illustrated for *πορφυρίων* in *Cod. Vind. med. gr.* 1, *f.* 483*v*, row 2, col. 2 (A.D. 512) (A. Garzya, *Dionysii Ixeuticon seu de Aucupio* [Leipzig 1963] pl. 5). It is worth noting that the wing plumage of a similar bird, the Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*), is very much like that of

scientific name of the Purple Gallinule indicates, its identity was recognized several centuries ago. Athenaeus adds, *καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ὤτων ἑκατέρωθεν εἶχε κρεμάμενα ὥσπερ οἱ ἀλεκτρυόνες τὰ κάλλαια*. Considering its size, coloration and wattles, Thompson supposed the bird to be a form of Guinea-fowl.[9] Yet there is no good reason to believe this, for the Guinea-fowl bears no similarity in shape or color to the Purple Gallinule and was well known to the Greeks as *μελεαγρίς*. The various species[10] of Guinea-fowl and the domesticated varieties (which differ little from the wild ones) have in common a uniquely speckled plumage and a mostly naked head and neck, giving them an appearance which is unusual, if not grotesque. Guinea-fowl have wattles, but they certainly do not "hang from the ears" (9.398F).[11] In fact, as the long

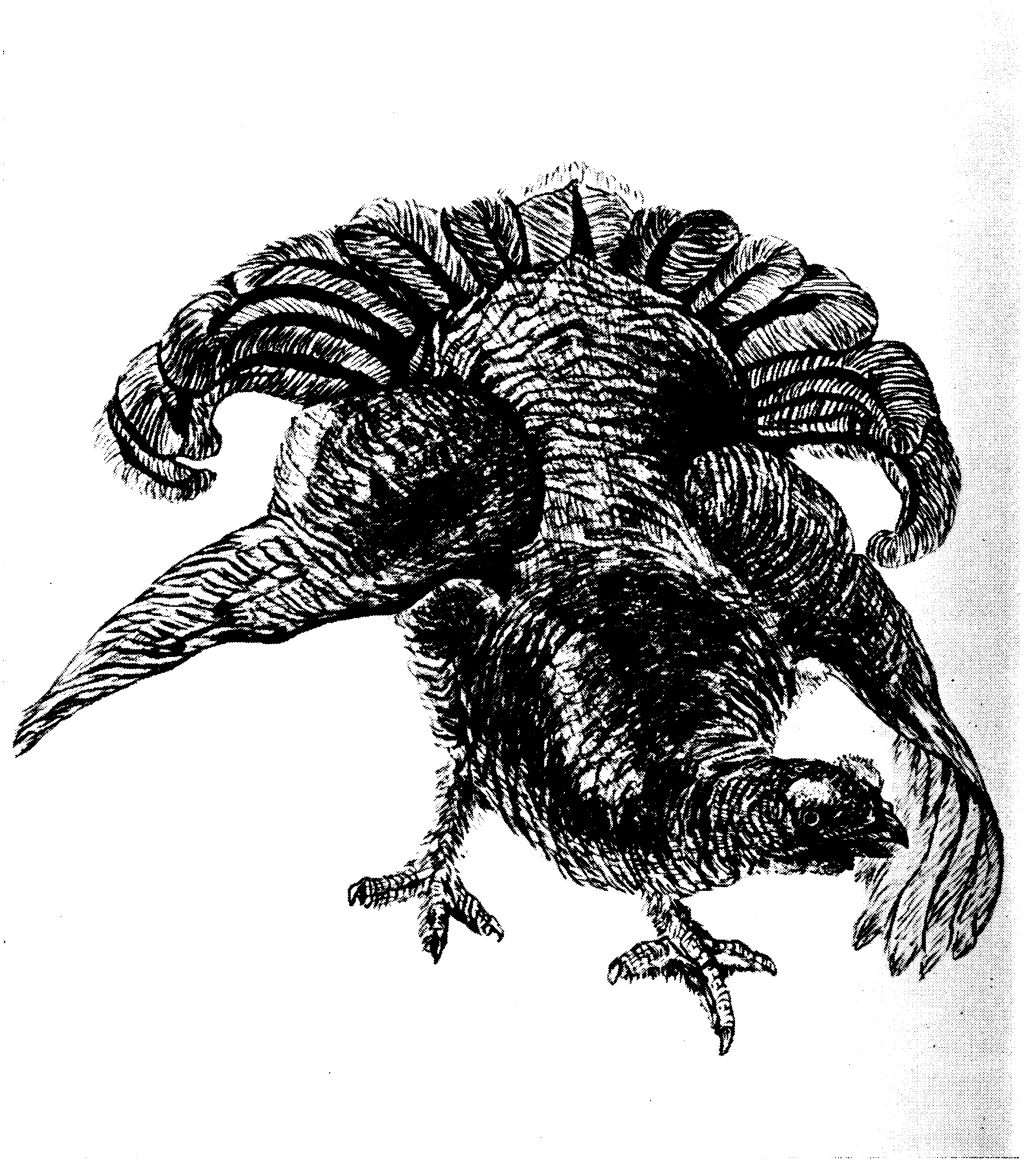
the Black Grouse. *Cf.* Peterson, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 52 and 164. For the most complete collection of illustrations of European birds see J. Gould, *The Birds of Europe* (London 1832–37): see vol. 4, pl. 250 for *Lyrurus tetrix*, pl. 340 for *Porphyrio hyacinthus* (*P. coeruleus*), pl. 342 for *Gallinula chloropus*. For grouse (*Tetraonidae*) see D. G. Elliot, *Monograph on the Tetraoninae* (*sic*) (New York 1865). On the genus Porphyrio, see D. G. Elliot, "The Genus Porphyrio and its Species," *Stray Feathers* 7 (1878) 6–25; R. Bowdler Sharpe, *The Catalogue of Birds in the British Museum* 23 (London 1894). Mounted specimens of the male Capercaillie, male and female Black Grouse, Purple Gallinule, Moorhen, Guinea-fowl and related birds will be found in the Hall of Bird Biology, American Museum of Natural History, New York.

[9] This idea is not originally Thompson's. *Videtur haec historia delineare Gallinam Numidicam:* Dalechamp *ap.* ed. I. Casaubonus (Heidelberg 1598) 398F. The source of the supposition that the tetrax is a Guinea-fowl probably lies in the description of *μελεαγρίς* in Ath. 14.655C–F (see n.5 *supra*). It should be noted that there are decided differences between the bird accurately portrayed there and the one described in 9.398Eff. The most conspicuous difference is in the formation of the wattles, which run along the cheeks from the beak (*cf.* Thompson 198–99). The parallel drawn to the cock is in the color of the wattles and not in their shape or position. To match 398Eff, the wattles would have to hang from the area behind the eyes. In addition, the bird would have to lose all of its remarkably speckled plumage, not to mention undergoing such great anatomical changes that it would also lose its original name and be identified with a bird which was unfamiliar to dwellers in Mediterranean countries. Still further, that in spite of such rigorous and extraordinary scientific breeding and domestication (in Moesia, no less) it remains so obscure as to baffle Athenaeus and all his sources of information. We cannot imagine the company of scholars being unable to recognize a Guinea-fowl, a bird which was as well-known to a Greek or a Roman as a chicken. It is illustrated in *Cod. Vind.* (*supra* n.8) row 6, col. 3, where it is called *κατοικίδιος ὄρνις*.

[10] There are a number of species (see Capponi, *op.cit.* [*supra* n.2] 578–79 n.4), but only the most common species from West Africa or Nubia were probably known to the ancients. The red-wattled variety is from Northwest Africa (*Numida meleagris*). See Thompson 198.

[11] Nearly fifty quotations from Aristotle's zoological works make it unlikely that Athenaeus was unaware of Aristotle's repeated statement that birds do not have *ὦτα*, only auditory passages. Arist. *HA* 492a13ff, 504a20ff; *PA* 657a15ff. Only once does Aristotle depart from a strict adherence to his own statements. Speaking of the Eared or Horned Owl, he is forced to say *περὶ τὰ ὦτα πτερύγια ἔχων*, *HA* 592b17. But these owls are an anomaly.

PLATE 2 FEINBERG



TETRAX *or* BLACK-COCK, DRUMMING

Drawing by Saul Feinberg after an old woodcut

(from illustration in Henry A. Leveson, *Sport in Many Lands* I [London 1877] 31)

standing controversy has shown, no bird precisely fits this description. Yet, considering the bird's size, the possibilities are limited to a very few.[12] Of these, there is one species which comes so close to matching the description that it presents a strong possibility that the text has been corrupted.

Native to Paeonia and Moesia are two related and rather large birds (both grouse) which have generally been considered identifiable with the tetrax—the Capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*) and the Black Grouse (*Lyrurus tetrix*). Of these, the male Black Grouse (Black-cock) does resemble the description in 9.398F but for the sentence *καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ὤτων ἑκατέρωθεν εἶχε κρεμάμενα ὥσπερ οἱ ἀλεκτρυόνες τὰ κάλλαια*, which contains a germ of truth although it is suspiciously inaccurate. The Black-cock has a unique plumage for a grouse, not unlike the Purple Gallinule's in its color and solidity, its body being a deep glossy purple, tending towards black, with dark brown and white on the wings (see PLATE 2). There is no other European game bird of similar coloration and size. The Capercaillie is not so colored but of greyish body with a glossy green breast and brown wings.[13] Furthermore, the male Black Grouse has two large bright-red wattles extending upward from each of its *eyes*.[14] The Purple Gallinule and its near relatives have a featherless patch extending from the base of the beak, over the head, between the eyes—a patch which is also bright-red. On the Capercaillie, the wattles are not developed, but appear as thin red eye-brows. The

as their name indicates, for they do give the appearance of having ears. *Cf.* Opp. *Cyneg.* 2.407, where the feathers on the side of the Great Bustard's head are called *οὖας*. Aristotle considers *οὖς* to refer only to the external appendage, and Plin. 11.50 reiterates his statements. While Aristotle's influence upon the scientific thinking of this period can hardly be denied, the reading cannot too easily be rejected on this point alone, since common speech may well have allowed the bird's hearing organs to be called *ὦτα*. As to the ears of cocks, only Colum. 8.2.8 mentions them. Today the fleshy masses on the sides of a cock's head are called *ear-lobes*, and Columella speaks of *albis auribus*—the white ear-lobe being characteristic of Mediterranean breeds (see E. Brown, *Races of Domestic Poultry* [London 1906] 393ff). I have been unable to determine what the ear-lobes were called in Greek, but *ὦτα* is the likely word. Again they would refer to external appendages, and to say that the cock *εἶχε τὰ κάλλαια κρεμάμενα ἀπὸ τῶν ὤτων* would then be pleonastic, since it would mean that the cock "had wattles hung from its wattles."

[12] See *supra* n.4.

[13] *Cf.* Peterson, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 104.

[14] *Cf. decet tetraonas suus nitor absolutaque nigritia in superciliis cocci rubor*, Plin. 10.(22)29. The bird described is the Black Grouse (Thompson 282, André 152). Tetraon, except for a variant reading on *τέταρος*, a pheasant, Ptol.Euerg. *ap.* Ath. 14.654c (Thompson 281–82), is not mentioned in Greek literature, leaving the name open to be identified with the tetrax. *Cf.* Thompson 283.

difficulty in identifying the passage (9.398F) with the Black-cock or any other bird lies in *ἀπὸ τῶν ὤτων*, which is not a credible reading. If emended to *ἀπὸ τῶν ὠπῶν*,[15] the words agree with the description of the Black-cock begun in the previous sentence.

With the text emended a much better comparison can be made, for *τὰ κάλλαια* do not necessarily mean 'chin-wattles'; and the absence of any species which looks like a Purple Gallinule and has chin-wattles hanging from either its ears or eyes in the manner of cocks (a nonsensical comparison)[16] surely indicates that another interpretation of *τὰ κάλλαια* is necessary. The following quotations demonstrate that *κάλλαια* is an ambiguous word, the meaning of which must be qualified by the context. If the wattles are located near the *ears*, they do not suggest a beard, but if they are placed above the *eyes*, they do resemble *combs*.

Comb

Arist. *HA* 631b10: *καὶ τό τε κάλλαιον ἐξαίρεται αὐταῖς καὶ τὸ οὐροπύγιον.*
Ibid. 631b28: *τό τε κάλλαιον ἔξωχρον γίνεται.*
Clem.Alex. *Paed.* 3.3 (ed. O. Stählin [Leipzig 1905] 1.247.7): *ταύτῃ καὶ τοὺς ἀλεκτρυόνας τοὺς ὑπερμαχοῦντας τῶν ὀρνίθων καθάπερ κόρυσι τοῖς κόλλεσιν ἐκαλλώπισεν.*
Schol. Clem.Alex. *ad loc.* (Migne 9.792c): *κόλλεον γὰρ τὸ ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς κτενοειδὲς ἐρυθρὸν σαρκίον τῶν ἀλεκτρυόνων.*
Philostr. *Ep.* 16 (26): *ἀλεκτρυὼν μαχιμώτερος ὁ τὰ κάλλαια ἐγηγερκώς.*[17]

Wattles

Ar. *Eq.* 497: *τοὺς λόφους κατεσθίειν χὤπως τὰ κάλλαι' ἀποφαγὼν ἥξεις πάλιν.*
Ael. *NA* 11.26: *ὁ δὲ ἀλεκτρυὼν καὶ οὗτος ⟨τὸν⟩ λόφον καὶ τὰ κάλλαια.*
Ibid. 15.1: *δύο πτερὰ ἀλεκτρυόνος ὑπὸ τοῖς καλλαίοις πεφυκότα.*
Ibid. 15.2: *κριὸς δὲ θῆλυς, ὡς οἱ ἀλεκτρυόνες τὰ κάλλαια, οὕτω τοι καὶ οὗτος ὑπὸ τῇ δέρῃ ἠρτημένους πλοκάμους ἔχει.*
Paus. 22.4: *κάλλαια δὲ καὶ ὁ λόφος κατὰ ἀνεμώνην μάλιστα.*
Gal. *De Alim.* 3.20.5: *λόφους δὲ καὶ κάλλαια τῶν ἀλεκτρυόνων οὔτ' ἐπαινέσειεν ἄν τις οὔτε ψέξειεν.*

[15] *ὦψ* is rare in Greek prose, but it occurs in Athenaeus' narrative. *Cf. εἶναι τοὺς ὦπας* 9.367A; Ar.Byz. *ap.* Ath. 7.287A (not in Nauck) *μεγάλους ὦπας ἔχει*; Asclepiades of Myrlea *ap.* Ath. 11.783B *ὅτι δύο ὦπας ἔχει.*

[16] Capponi, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 596, struggles with the problem.

[17] Here *κάλλαια* means a single comb, because it is serrated. *Cf.* the coins of Himera (Sicily) in R. S. Poole, *A Catalogue of Greek Coins in the British Museum* (London 1876; repr. Bologna 1963) 2.76–78; Thompson 34.

Ammon. 261: *κάλλαια μὲν γάρ εἰσιν οἱ τῶν ἀλεκτρυόνων πώγωνες.*
Cf. Clytus Milesius *ap.* Ath. 14.655D *(μελεαγρίς): πρὸς δὲ ταῖς γνάθοις ἀπὸ τοῦ στόματος ἀρξαμένην ἀντὶ πώγωνος μακρὰν σάρκα καὶ ἐρυθροτέραν τῶν ὀρνίθων.*
Schol. Ar. *Eq.* 497: *κάλλαια δὲ τοὺς πώγωνας τῶν ἀλεκτρυόνων.*
Hesych.: *κάλλαια· οἱ τῶν ἀλεκτρυόνων πώγωνες.*
Suid.: *κάλλαια· οἱ πώγωνες τῶν ἀλεκτρυόνων. χ'ὥπως τὰ κάλλαι' ἀποφαγὼν ἥξεις πάλιν.*
Eust. 1278.50: *καὶ κάλλαια παρὰ τῷ κωμικῷ οἱ πώγωνες τῶν ἀλεκτρυόνων.*

Tail Feathers

Ael.Dion. *ap.* Eust. 1278.52f: *καὶ τὰ ἐν τῇ αὐτῶν δὲ οὐρᾷ πτερὰ κατὰ Αἴλιον Διονύσιον.*

Based upon the assumption that *τὰ κάλλαια* were chin-wattles, *κρεμάμενα* has been translated 'hung', but the word need not imply that the object is *pendent*. Thus it can mean 'fixed to the top of something' (implying that the attachment is precarious) as in Xen. *An.* 3.2.19 *οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐφ' ἵππων κρέμανται φοβούμενοι οὐχ ἡμᾶς μόνον καὶ τὸ καταπεσεῖν*, or Hdt. 5.114 *καί μιν ἀνεκρέμασαν ὑπὲρ τῶν πυλέων· κρεμαμένης δὲ τῆς κεφαλῆς, κτλ.* The Black-cock's wattles are on the side of the head above the eyes as outgrowths of the upper eye-lids. They also rise above the head as do cocks' combs. The notion that *τὰ κάλλαια* should be translated 'chin-wattles' can be traced directly to Eustathius, who not only quotes Athenaeus but also defines the word (see n.2, *supra*), deriving the meaning from Aristophanes as do the lexicographers.

With the emendation and the reinterpretation of *τὰ κάλλαια*, Athenaeus can then offer the following perfect description of the Black-cock:

> Its size was larger than the largest cock, but its color was similar to a Purple Gallinule's. Furthermore, there hung from its eyes, on either side, wattles, like cocks' combs.

The Tetrax of Alexander of Myndus

Ath. 9.398D: *τέτραξ τὸ μεγεθος ἴσος σπερμολόγῳ τὸ χρῶμα κεραμεοῦς, ῥυπαραῖς στιγμαῖς καὶ μεγάλαις γραμμαῖς ποικίλος, καρποφάγος. ὅταν ᾠοτοκῇ δέ, τετράζει τῇ φωνῇ.*

The tetrax[18] described by Alexander of Myndus is said to be "equal in size to a σπερμολόγος, clay-colored, varied with dusky spots and large lines." Thompson's dismissal of this description as unidentifiable was hasty, especially since he was quite certain that the σπερμολόγος was a Rook (*Corvus frugilegus*).[19] Athenaeus took this tetrax to be a species other than that described in 9.398F–399A, because the two differed from each other so markedly in appearance. This, however, need not be the case. The bird is, it seems, a female (ὅταν ᾠοτοκῇ δέ, τετράζει τῇ φωνῇ), and as such would not at all resemble the description in 398F–399A, which is that of a male. The colors are characteristic of female grouse in general, and the description could fit almost any species but for the size. The female Black Grouse is considerably smaller (16 in.) and slimmer than the male (21 in.), about the same size as a Rook, and "brownish above, barred with chestnut and greyish on the breast and some white on the wings."[20] A comparison of Alexander's description to a live or mounted specimen of a female Black Grouse will reveal no discrepancies.[21]

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[18] Thompson's statement (p.283) that this bird may also be a Guinea-fowl is totally without foundation. No Guinea-fowl comes even remotely close to matching the description given. Both Linnaeus, *loc.cit.* (*supra* n.4), and Capponi, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 597, took this bird to be the Little Bustard. Capponi, certain that the bird in *De Aucupio* I was a Great Bustard, felt that this bird must be a Little Bustard because it was smaller but similar in coloration. Yet the similarities do not outweigh the differences. The Little Bustard has a white breast and is very thinly barred on the back. Its Greek name is ὠτίς, as is the name of all the bustards. It is described by Aristotle *ap.* Ath. 9.390E (292 Rose). *Cf.* Peterson, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 81 and 115.

[19] Thompson 265. Alexis the Epicurean (Ath. 8.344C) answered the σπερμολόγοι ('gossips') who taunted him with, "What do you like to eat most?" by saying, "σπερμολόγοι—roasted." The Rook is good eating (see *Encyclopaedia* [*Britannica*] 5 [Philadelphia 1798–1804] *s.v.* CORVUS), especially in a pie. The bird, however, is seldom eaten, for it is extremely intelligent and wary of danger, making it difficult to catch. Its seed-picking habits are memorably related in the *Encyclopaedia* (*op.cit.*) 16 *s.v.* ROOK. That these birds caw at and seem to mock people and animals who represent a threat to them is well known by anyone who has met them or any of their genus. N.B. σπερμολόγος and σπερματολόγος are also adjectives (Epich. *ap.* Ath. 2.65B; 9.398D [*bis*]; Kaibel, *CGF* I.99; Alex. Mynd. *ap.* Ath. 9.387F [not 387B as in Thompson]; Wellmann, *op.cit.* [*supra* n.1] fr. 7, pp.549–50) and may then refer to granivorous birds such as pheasants, grouse, etc. Thompson (p.265) errs in taking σπερματολόγος nominally.

[20] C. T. Regan, *Natural History* (London n.d.) 464. For illustrations of the female see n.8 *supra*.

[21] I wish to express my gratitude to Professor William M. Calder III and Professor J. F. Gilliam for their invaluable criticism. My father kindly provided the illustration.