

## EDWARDS'S PHEASANT



Photo: "subhumanfreak"

Edwards's Pheasant, *Lophura edwardsi*, is endemic to the rainforests of Vietnam. It is 58-67cm in length, with red legs and facial skin. The male is a mainly blue-black bird with a small crest. The female is a drab brown bird. The alarm call is a *puk-puk-puk*.

This species, named after the French ornithologist Alphonse Milne-Edwards, has two forms. The nominate form, *L. e. edwardsi*, has a white crest and upper tail, whereas the northern form, *L. e. hatinhensis*, is found with a variable number of white retrices\*. It has been suggested that the difference in the two forms may be due to inbreeding of a restricted, fragmented population. This phenomenon has been observed in captive, inbred, *L. e. edwardsi*. The northern form is sometimes elevated to separate species status, as the **Vietnamese Pheasant**, *Lophura hatinhensis* (Vo Quy, 1975).

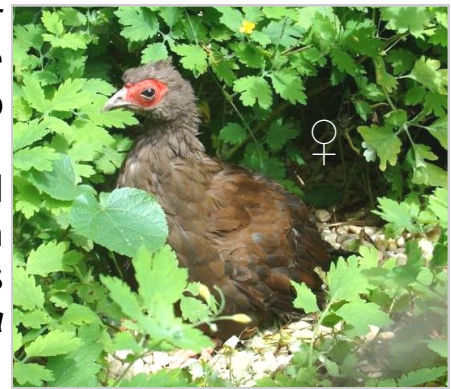


Photo: "Thaisk"

Both forms are currently listed as endangered species, having suffered from deforestation, hunting and the use of defoliants during the Vietnam War. The species is currently believed to number between 1000-3000 birds in the wild, mostly of the nominate form. Edwards's Pheasant breeds well in captivity, where it is the subject of ex-situ conservation.

\*The very long contour feathers coming from the side of the tail.