

## SEMIOPTERA WALLACII (Gray).

Wallace's Standard-wing.

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- Paradisea wallacei*, Gray, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1859, p. 130.—Schlegel, J. f. O. 1861, p. 385.—Id. Mus. Pays-Bas, Coraces, p. 91 (1867).  
*Paradisea (Semioptera) wallacii*, Sclater, Ibis, 1859, p. 210.  
*Semioptera wallacii*, Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1859, p. 351.—Sclater, Ibis, 1859, p. 322.—Gould, B. Austr. Suppl. pl. 3 (1859).—Sclater, Ibis, 1860, p. 26, pl. 2.—Wallace, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1860, p. 61.—Gray, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1860, p. 355.—Wallace, Ibis, 1861, p. 212.—Rosenb. J. f. O. 1864, p. 125.—Finsch, Neu-Guinea, p. 105 (1865).—Gould, Handb. B. Austr. ii. p. 532 (1865).—Finsch, J. f. O. 1866, p. 135.—Wallace, Malay Archip. ii. pp. 41, 409, 419, cum tab. (1869).—Elliot, Monogr. Parad. pl. 18 (1873).—Salvad. Ann. Mus. Civic. Genov. vii. p. 785 (1875), ix. p. 190 (1876).—Sharpe, Cat. Birds Brit. Mus. iii. p. 178 (1877).—Eudes-Deslongch. Ann. Mus. Caen, i. p. 38 (1880).—Salvad. Orn. Papuasie, etc. ii. p. 572 (1881).—Guillem. Proc. Zool. Soc. 1885, p. 574.—D'Hamonv. Bull. Soc. Zool. France, 1886, p. 510.—Salvad. Agg. Orn. Papuasie, ii. p. 157 (1890).—Sharpe, Bull. Brit. Orn. Club, iv. p. xiii (1894).  
*Semioptera wallacii*, var. *halmaherae*, Salvad. Orn. Papuasie, etc. ii. p. 573 (1881).—Id. Agg. Orn. Papuasie, ii. p. 157 (1890).  
*Epimachus wallacii*, Gray, Hand-l. B. i. p. 105, no. 1276 (1869).—Musschenbr. Dagboek, pp. 203, 235 (1883).—Rosenb. Mitth. orn. Ver. Wien, 1885, p. 53.  
*Epimachus wallacei*, var. *halmaherae*, Musschenbr. Dagboek, pp. 204, 235 (1883).  
*Semioptera gouldi*, Boucard, Humming-Bird, i. p. 43.  
*Semioptera halmaherae*, Sharpe, Bull. Brit. Orn. Club, iv. p. xiii (1894).

THIS wonderful Bird of Paradise was discovered in the island of Batchian in the Moluccas, and was considered by Dr. Wallace to be one of the most important of the discoveries made by him during his celebrated expedition to the Malay Archipelago, as was undoubtedly the case. He likewise met with a Standard-wing in Halmahéra, or Gilolo, as it was then called, and he noted certain differences, which have since been considered sufficient by Count Salvadori to separate the Halmahéra bird as a variety, under the name *Semioptera wallacii*, var. *halmaherae*. On looking over the series in the British Museum, where we have specimens from both islands, I am inclined to disregard the greater amount of violet on the crown as only of slight importance, neither can I see much in the less plentiful amount of the feathering of the frontal plumes, which does not show forth very strongly; but the longer shield-plumes are an evident if a slight character, and may be sufficient for those who wish to separate *S. halmaherae* as a race of *S. wallacii*.

Very little has been recorded of the habits of this extraordinary bird, and the following is Dr. Wallace's account of it in his well-known work on the Malay Archipelago.

He thus relates his first discovery of this wonderful Bird of Paradise in the island of Batchian:—"Just as I got home, I overtook Ali returning from shooting, with some birds hanging from his belt. He seemed much pleased, and said, 'Look here, Sir, what a curious bird,' holding out what at first completely puzzled me. I saw a bird with a mass of splendid green feathers on its breast, elongated into two glittering tufts; but what I could not understand was a pair of long white feathers, which stuck straight out from each shoulder. Ali assured me that the bird stuck them out this way itself, when fluttering its wings, and that they had remained so without his touching them." Again he writes:—"On lifting the wing-coverts these feathers are seen to arise from two tubular horny sheaths, which diverge from near the point of junction of the carpal bones."

The following note was given by Dr. Wallace to the late Mr. John Gould:—

"The *Semioptera* frequents the lower trees of the virgin forests, and is almost constantly in motion. It flies from branch to branch, and clings to the twigs and even to the vertical smooth trunks almost as easily as a Woodpecker. It continually utters a harsh croaking cry, something between that of *Paradisea apoda* and the more musical cry of *Cicinnurus regius*. The males, at short intervals, open and flutter their wings, erect the long shoulder-feathers, and expand the elegant shields on each side of the breast. Like the Birds of Paradise, the females and young birds far outnumber the fully plumaged birds, which renders it probable that the extraordinary accessory plumes are not fully developed until the third or fourth year. The bird seems to feed principally upon fruit, but it probably takes insects occasionally. I have obtained