

45.

ASTRARCHIA STEPHANIÆ, *Finsch & Meyer.*

Princess Stephanie's Bird of Paradise.

Astrarchia stephaniæ, Finsch & Meyer, Zeitschr. ges. Orn. ii. p. 378, pl. xviii. (1885).—*Ibid.* Ibis, 1886. p. 245.—D'Hamonv. Bull. Soc. Zool. France, xi. pp. 505, 509 (1886).—Meyer, J. f. O. 1889, p. 321.—Goodwin, P. Z. S. 1889, p. 451.—*Ibid.* Ibis, 1890, p. 153.—De Vis, Ann. Rep. Brit. New Guinea, p. 61 (1890).—*Ibid.* Colon. Papers, no. 103, p. 113 (1890).—Salvad. Agg. Orn. Pap. ii. p. 151 (1890).—De Vis, Ibis, 1891, p. 36.—Salvad. Agg. Orn. Pap. iii. p. 240 (1891).—De Vis, Ann. Rep. Brit. New Guinea, p. 95 (1892).

THE present wonderful bird was discovered in the Horseshoe Mountains by the late Mr. Carl Hunstein, and is, like the equally wonderful *Paradisornis rudolphi*, an inhabitant of the Owen Stanley Range, in South-eastern New Guinea. The last-named bird was dedicated by Dr. Finsch to the late Crown Prince of Austria, and *Astrarchia stephaniæ* to the Crown Princess Stephanie.

So far as is known at present the *Astrarchia* is confined to the Owen Stanley Range. Since Hunstein's discovery of the species, it has only been met with by Sir William McGregor during his expedition up the same range of mountains. Mr. H. O. Forbes did not meet with it during his journey to the Owen Stanley Mountains, but saw it on one occasion.

The only notes on the habits of the species which appear to have been published as yet are those of Mr. Goodwin in 'The Ibis' for 1890. He was fortunate enough to accompany Sir William McGregor's expedition and has written the following remarks:—"In the same locality (Mount Musgrave, 6000 to 9000 feet) we procured several female specimens of the Stephanie's Paradise-bird (*Astrarchia stephaniæ*), being the first examples of that sex yet discovered. The male bird, of which there is only one specimen known, was described by Dr. Meyer of Dresden from a specimen sent to Europe by the late Mr. Hunstein. It may be noted that, although we remained for some time in the same locality, no specimen of this rare species was seen after the first day or two. As I had not the good fortune to come across one myself, I am unable to give much information on this very interesting species." Sir William McGregor procured both sexes on Mount Suckling in July 1891 at a height of 7720 feet.

The type of this grand bird is in the Dresden Museum, where, by the courtesy of Dr. Meyer, we had the pleasure of examining it in 1891. The following is the description which we wrote at the time:—

Adult male. General colour above olive-greenish, of a velvety texture; rump and upper tail-coverts blackish; wing-coverts black with a slight olive-green gloss; quills black, with a purplish gloss on the inner secondaries; tail-feathers black, the inner ones with white shafts, and with a beautiful purple gloss, the edges recurved as in *Quiscalus major*; head metallic steel-green, with a purple gloss, forehead and sides of face as well as the throat and chest glossy emerald-green; ear-coverts more steel-blue, becoming purplish as they form a frill on each side of the nape; sides of the neck and a broad band across the chest bronzy velvet, with lilac or purplish reflection, this chest-band edged below with fiery copper, which separates the breast from the fore neck; rest of under surface coppery red, with metallic green shades on the flanks and abdomen. Total length about 31 inches, culmen 1·3, wing 6·4, tail about 26, tarsus 1·8.

Adult female. General colour above dull olive-brown, slightly mottled with black bases to the feathers; wing-coverts and quills velvety black, with a faint purplish gloss, narrowly edged with olive-brown; tail-feathers velvety black, with a very faint purplish gloss; head all round, throat, and fore neck black, slightly glossed with oily green; some of the feathers of the hind neck tipped with rusty brown edges; remainder of under surface of body tawny buff, barred across with black, including the under tail-coverts; under wing-coverts and axillaries black, with bars of deep tawny buff near the ends; the chest rather deeper tawny colour than the rest of the under surface and more closely barred with black; quills purplish black below. Total length 20·5 inches, culmen 1·25, wing 6, tail 13, tarsus 1·6.

The female described above is in the British Museum. Two specimens were brought to England by