

ASTRAPIA NIGRA (Gm.).

39.

Gorgeted Bird of Paradise.

- Gorget Paradise Bird*, Lath. Ind. Orn. i. p. 478, pl. 20 (1782).
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Paradisea gularis, Lath. Ind. Orn. i. p. 196 (1790).—Shaw, Gen. Zool. vii. p. 501, pls. 69, 70 (1809).
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L'Oiseau de Paradis à gorge d'or, Sonnini, ed. Buffon, ix. p. 23 (1806).
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Merle de la Nouvelle Guinée, Cuv. Règn. An. i. p. 355 (1817).
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LIKE most of the genera of the *Paradiseidae*, this extraordinary bird stands apart from the others, and presents us with characters which are found in no other genus of this wonderful family. The long tail has suggested to many ornithologists that the species must be allied to the long-tailed *Epimachi* or Sickle-billed Birds of Paradise, and in my arrangement of the family I have placed it next to those birds; but the short and stout bill shows that it must be classed with the true Birds of Paradise, and not with the *Epimachi*. By the possession of a ruff on the head, it also shows itself a true Paradise-bird, and the other ornamental developments of the plumage also demonstrate that it is more allied to the latter than to the Sickle-bills.

Although it is only in recent years that perfect specimens of this wonderful bird have reached Europe, it has been known from skins of native preparation for one hundred years. The first specimen described appears to have been acquired by Sir Joseph Banks during his voyage with Captain Cook; but the original specimen has disappeared, and is not in the Banksian collection at the British Museum of the present day.

The range of the species seems to be limited to the mountains of the North-western portion of New Guinea, though many of the recent visitors to that portion of the great Papuan island did not obtain specimens. Neither Wallace nor D'Albertis met with it, but Beccari and Guillemard procured examples. Baron von Rosenberg also got a few specimens, and several perfect skins of both sexes have been sold in Europe during the last twenty years, doubtless procured by the hunters employed by the late Mr. Bruijn of Ternate. It has also been said to inhabit the island of Jobi, but apparently on insufficient evidence.

The native name is given as 'Haroma' or 'Aroma' by Beccari and Guillemard. The latter gentleman observes:—"The natives say that they do not think that this bird is really much less abundant than the *Epimachus*, although so few skins are ever obtained. They are found in the same district as the latter bird, and,