

## APTERYX AUSTRALIS, *Shaw*.

### Kiwi Kiwi.

*Apteryx Australis*, Shaw, Nat. Misc., vol. xxiv. Pls. 1057, 1058; and Gen. Zool. vol. xiii. p. 71.—Less. Traité d'Orn. p. 12.—Cuv. Règne Anim. t. i. p. 498, note.—Yarrell, in Trans. Zool. Soc. vol. i. p. 71. Pl. 10.—Owen, Art. Aves, Cycl. of Anat. and Phys., vol. i. 1836, p. 269,\* and in Trans. Zool. Soc. vol. ii. p. 257.

*Apteryx*, Temm. Man. d'Orn. 2nd. Edit. Anal. p. cxiv.

*Apterous Penguin*, Lath. Gen. Hist. vol. x. p. 394.

*Dromiceius Novæ-Zelandiæ*, Less. Man. t. ii. p. 210.

*Kiwi-Kiwi*, Aborigines of New Zealand.

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FOR our first knowledge of this bird we are indebted to the late Dr. Shaw, to whom the specimen figured by him in the "Naturalists' Miscellany" was presented by Captain Barclay, of the ship Providence, who brought it from New Zealand about 1812. Dr. Shaw's figure was accompanied by a detailed drawing of the bill, foot, and rudimentary wing, of the natural size. After Dr. Shaw's death, his at that time unique specimen passed into the possession of the Earl of Derby, then Lord Stanley. His Lordship's being a private collection, and no other specimen having been seen either on the continent or in England, the existence of the species was doubted by naturalists generally for upwards of twenty years. M. Temminck, it is true, placed it with hesitation in an order to which he gave the title of *Inertes*, comprehending the present bird and the Dodo; but other naturalists were inclined to deny its existence altogether. The history of the bird remained in this state until June 1833, when my friend Mr. Yarrell published in the "Transactions of the Zoological Society" an interesting paper, detailing all that had been previously made known respecting it, and fully established it among accredited species: this paper was accompanied by a figure from the original specimen still in the possession of the Earl of Derby; I have since had the good fortune to become acquainted with five additional specimens, and to obtain some further information respecting the history of the species. Two of these, from which my figures are taken, were presented to the Zoological Society by the New Zealand Company: the Society also possesses a third, but imperfect specimen, which was presented by Alexander MacLeay, Esq., of Sydney; and two others have been recently added to the collection of the Earl of Derby, one of which having been liberally presented to me by his Lordship, my thanks are especially due for this interesting addition to my collections.

A mature consideration of the form and structure of this most remarkable bird, leads me to assign it with little hesitation to the family of *Struthionidæ*; and my reasons for doing so will, I think, be obvious to every one who will examine and compare the species with the members of that group. The essential characters in which it differs consist in the elongated form of the bill, in the shortness of the tarsi, and in the possession of a sharp spur, terminating a posterior rudimentary toe. Regarding the Ostrich as the species to which it is least nearly related, we find in the Emu and Rhea a much nearer approach, not only in the more lengthened form of the bill of the latter, but also in the situation of the nostrils, which in the Rhea are placed nearer the tip than in any other species of the group, the Apteryx excepted; in fact, when we compare the bills of these two birds, it is very evident that both are formed on one plan, that of the Apteryx being an elongated representative of the Rhea, with the nostrils placed at the extreme tip: in both these birds there is the same peculiar elevated horny cere or fold. The tarsi are much shorter, and the nails of the toes much more curved than in the Rhea; but the scaly covering of these parts in both birds is precisely the same; and it may be further observed that the number of toes increase as we pass on from the Ostrich, there being only two in that bird, three in the Rhea, Emu, etc., and three with a rudiment of a fourth in the Apteryx. The wing of the Apteryx, although scarcely more than rudimentary, agrees with that of the Rhea in having a strongly hooked claw at its extremity; while in the structure of its feather it approaches nearest to the Cassowary; but unlike what obtains in that bird, the feathers are entirely destitute of the accessory plume, in which latter respect it again agrees with the Rhea. The members of this group, although few in number, are remarkable for their structural peculiarities, each being modified for its own peculiar habits

\* I was not aware of the existence of Professor Owen's paper at the time I published my first account of this bird, otherwise it would not have remained unnoticed.