

PTILINOPUS SUPERBUS.

Superb Fruit-Pigeon.

Colombe poukiobou, Columba superba, Temm. Les. Fig., fol. 2nd fam., p. 75. pl. 33.—Ibid. Fig. et Gall., 8vo. tom. i. pp. 277, 474.

THIS lovely species was originally figured and described in the splendid work on the Pigeons by Madame Knip and my friend M. Temminck as an inhabitant of one of the islands of the Pacific Ocean; and it affords me much pleasure to be enabled to include a representation of it among my illustrations of the Fauna of Australia, specimens having been procured by Mr. Bynoe on Booby Island, which lies off the north coast. In all probability it enjoys an extensive range over the islands of New Guinea as well as over all parts of Northern Australia, wherever suitable situations occur. The specimens procured by Mr. Bynoe were fortunately male and female: the latter sex exhibits in its plumage traces of immaturity; but whether the rich colouring of the crown of the head is at all times absent is a point yet to be ascertained, a knowledge of which would greatly tend to clear up the confusion which reigns throughout this gorgeously-coloured group of Pigeons.

The male has the crown of the head of a very deep rich purple; sides of the head and occiput olive-green; sides and back of the neck bright rufous; shoulders very dark bluish black; all the upper surface and wings deep yellowish green, tinged with rufous; the scapularies and tertiaries with a spot of deep green near the extremity; primaries and secondaries black, slightly margined externally near the tip with pale yellow; tail grey at the base, to which succeeds a broad band of black, glossed particularly on the central feathers with green; beyond this the tips are white, all but the outer ones washed with green; chin white; breast grey, below which a band of black; abdomen and under tail-coverts white, the latter with a stripe of olive down the centre; band crossing the flanks and another crossing the thighs olive-green; feet orange; bill dark horn-colour.

The female has the crown of the head and all the upper surface yellowish green, with a small spot of deep blue near the tips of the scapularies; primaries and secondaries black, slightly edged with yellow; at the occiput a large patch of deep green; chin grey; centre of breast greenish grey; flanks green; centre of abdomen straw-yellow.

The figures are those of the two sexes on a plant of the north coast.