

tion, the tips of the twigs being so arranged as to curve inwards and nearly meet at the top: in the interior of the bower the materials are so placed that the forks of the twigs are always presented outwards, by which arrangement not the slightest obstruction is offered to the passage of the birds. The interest of this curious bower is much enhanced by the manner in which it is decorated at and near the entrance with the most gaily-coloured articles that can be collected, such as the blue tail-feathers of the Rose-hill and Pennantian Parrots, bleached bones, the shells of snails, &c.; some of the feathers are stuck in among the twigs, while others with the bones and shells are strewn about near the entrances. The propensity of these birds to pick up and fly off with any attractive object, is so well known to the natives, that they always search the runs for any small missing article, as the bowl of a pipe, &c., that may have been accidentally dropped in the brush. I myself found at the entrance of one of them a small neatly-worked stone tomahawk, of an inch and a half in length, together with some slips of blue cotton rags, which the birds had doubtless picked up at a deserted encampment of the natives.

For what purpose these curious bowers are made, is not yet, perhaps, fully understood; they are certainly not used as a nest, but as a place of resort for many individuals of both sexes, which, when there assembled, run through and around the bower in a sportive and playful manner, and that so frequently that it is seldom entirely deserted.

The proceedings of these birds have not been sufficiently watched, to render it certain whether the runs are frequented throughout the whole year or not; but it is highly probable that they are merely resorted to as a rendezvous, or playing-ground, at the pairing time and during the period of incubation. It was at this season, as I judged from the state of the plumage and from the internal indications of those I dissected, that I visited these localities; the bowers I found had been recently renewed; it was however evident, from the appearance of a portion of the accumulated mass of sticks, &c., that the same spot had been used as a place of resort for many years. Mr. Charles Coxen informed me, that, after having destroyed one of these bowers and secreted himself, he had the satisfaction of seeing it partially reconstructed; the birds engaged in this task, he added, were females. With much care and trouble I succeeded in bringing to England two fine specimens of these bowers, one of which I presented to the British Museum, and the other to the collection at Leyden, where they may be seen by all those who take an interest in the subject.

It will be observed, that the two following nearly allied species, *Chlamydera maculata* and *Chlam. nuchalis*, also build similar erections, and that in them the decorative propensity is carried to a much greater extent than in the Satin Bower-bird.

The adult male has the whole of the plumage of a deep shining blue-black, closely resembling satin, with the exception of the primary wing-feathers, which are of a deep velvety black, and the wing-coverts, secondaries and tail-feathers, which are also of a velvety black, tipped with the shining blue-black lustre; irides beautiful light blue with a circle of red round the pupil; bill bluish horn, passing into yellow at the tip; legs and feet yellowish white.

The female has the head and all the upper surface greyish green; wings and tail dark sulphur-brown, the inner webs of the primaries being the darkest; under surface containing the same tints as the upper, but very much lighter, and with a wash of yellow; each feather of the under surface also has a crescent-shaped mark of dark brown near the extremity, giving the whole a scaly appearance; irides of a deeper blue than in the male, and with only an indication of the red ring; bill dark horn-colour; feet yellowish white tinged with olive.

Young males closely resemble the females, but differ in having the under surface of a more greenish yellow hue, and the crescent-shaped markings more numerous; irides dark blue; feet olive brown; bill blackish olive.

The Plate represents the bower, an old male, female, and two young males; one in the green dress and the other in a state of change, all about a fifth less than the natural size.