PITTA IRIS, *Gould.*

Rainbow Pitta.

Pitta Iris, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., February 8, 1842.

Two specimens of this new and beautiful *Pitta*, both killed on the north coast of Australia, have already come under my notice. One of these is in the collection of Dr. Bankier, Acting Surgeon of H.M.S. Pelorus, and the other, apparently a female, is in the British Museum, having been lately presented to the national collection with many other fine birds, by Captain Chambers, R.N., of the same vessel.

The Rainbow Pitta differs so much from all other known species of this lovely tribe of birds, as to render a comparison quite unnecessary. By its discovery we can now enumerate three species from Australia. How rapidly is this fine country unfolding her rich treasures, of which, indeed, sufficient have been seen to rank her second to none in the interest of her productions!

Both the specimens above mentioned are from the Cobourg Peninsula, where the species is not uncommon, and it will doubtless, hereafter, be found to range over a great portion of the north coast. No further account of the habits of this fine bird have been received than that it inhabits the thick "cane-beds" near the coast, through which it runs with great facility; the boldness and richness of its markings render it a most attractive object in the bush.

Head, neck, breast, abdomen, flanks and thighs deep velvety black; over the eye, extending to the occiput, a band of ferruginous brown; upper surface and wings golden green; shoulders bright metallic cærulean blue, bordered below with lazuline blue; primaries black, passing into olive-brown at their tips, the third, fourth, fifth and sixth having a spot about the centre of the feather; tail black at the base, green at the tip, the former colour running on the inner web nearly to the tip; rump-feathers tinged with cærulean blue; lower part of the abdomen and under tail-coverts bright scarlet, separated from the black of the abdomen by yellowish brown; irides dark brown; bill black; feet flesh-colour.

The figures are of the natural size.