TANTALUS LEUCOCEPHALUS.

Rosy Tantalus.

Tantalus leucocephalus, Gmel. Edit. Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 649.—Lath. Ind. Orn., vol. ii. p. 706.—Forst. Zool. Indic., p. 20, pl. 10.—Penn. Ind. Zool., p. 47.—Temm. Man. d'Orn., 2nd edit. tom. i. p. ciii.—Bonn. et Vieill. Ency. Méth., Orn., part iii. p. 1151, pl. 56. fig. 1.—Sykes in Proc. of Comm. of Sci. and Corr. of Zool. Soc., part ii. p. 160.—Blyth, Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. Calcutta, p. 275.—Jerd. Madras Journ. of Lit. and Sci., vol. xii. p. 202.—Kelaart, Prod. Faun. Zeyl., p. 133.—Gray, List of Spec. of Birds in Coll. Brit. Mus., part iii. p. 90.—Bonap. Tab. Syn. des Hérons, in Comp. Rend. de l'Acad. des Sci., Avril 2, 1855, tom. xl.—Burgess in Proc. Zool. Soc., part xxiii. p. 72.—Layard in Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist., 2nd ser. vol. xiv. p. 115.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., tom. ii. p. 150.—Shaw, Gen. Zool., vol. xii. part i. p. 2.—Tytler in Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist., 2nd ser. vol. iii. p. 374.

White-headed Ibis, Lath. Gen. Syn., vol. v. p. 116.—Id. Supp. p. 240.—Penn. Ind. Zool. 4to, pl. xi.—Id. Hind., vol. p. 212, vol. ii. p. 158.—Id. Outl., vol. iv. p. 128.—Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. ix. p. 160.

Tantalus Indicus, Cuvier, Regn. Anim., tom. i. p. 481 (Blyth).

Dokh of the Hindoos.

Jaunghal in Hindustan (Jerdon).

Kât Sârungâ of the Hindoos (Blyth).

Lamjang and Lumduck of the Scindees.

Datudua, Cing., lit. Sickle-bill (Layard).

Changa vella nary, Mal. Nary is the general Tamul name for all Storks (Layard).

The subject of the present memoir—the Great Indian Tantalus—stands out so conspicuously among the Grallatores, or Wading Birds, that it may fairly be considered one of the most elegant and beautiful birds of its order. It is fully equal to a Stork in size, being about three feet in height; and although by no means common in our collections, it has been long known to ornithologists. In the early work of Pennant it is not only described, but tolerably well figured; while Latham, Shaw, and all subsequent writers have included it in their general histories. Its range of habitat is very great, extending over the whole of the warmer, lacustrine, and flatter portions of the Indian Peninsula.

The ancient and extensive tanks, forming one of the many evidences of India's former greatness, now (particularly in Ceylon) the constant resorts of Crocodiles, and the nightly rendezvous of the huge Elephant, are also situations frequented by the Rosy Tantalus. After repeating that India generally, including Ceylon, Assam, and Aracan, is inhabited by the bird, I may add that the fine specimen from which my figure was taken was sent to London by M. Mouhôt, from Siam. From the meagre accounts which have reached us respecting its habits and economy, we may gather enough to be assured that it is one of the most useful, as well as one of the most beautiful, of Indian birds. The number of lizards and other reptiles it daily devours appears to be enormous; hence, as is always the case, nature has placed the right bird in the right place; and in no other country, probably, will it ever thrive or be acclimatized, whatever may be the efforts of Societies expressly formed for such a purpose.

I shall now give in detail the few notes that have been recorded by Indian officers respecting this species.

"The *Pelican Ibis* (as it may be termed)," says Dr. Jerdon, "is common all over India, frequenting rivers, tanks, pools, and marshes, generally in parties more or less numerous, and feeding on fish, frogs, and aquatic insects, and also, according to Sykes, on vegetable matter. It perches freely and breeds on lofty trees during the hot weather and monsoon. During the heat of the day, they may be seen standing motionless in the water, knee-deep, digesting their morning's meal: they are said to feed a good deal during the night. The scapulars assume their most beautiful rosy tinge during the hot weather, or breeding-season."

"The Pelican Ibis, as it is called by Dr. Jerdon," says Lieut. Burgess, "is a common bird in the Deccan, frequenting rivers and tanks, and feeding, I believe, chiefly on fish. Its large size renders it remarkable, particularly during the breeding-season, when the back and scapularies attain their rich rosy tint. These birds are social, feeding in flocks. I was told, by the natives of a village close to a tank frequented by them, and near to one of their breeding-places, that when they fish in the tank they walk in the shallow water in a line, driving the fish before them. In another village, about ten miles from the Godavery River, where there are a great number of large banian trees both outside and inside the walls, I found a community of

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