## CHALCOPHASIS SCLATERI.

Sclater's Monaul.

Lophophorus Sclateri, Jerd. Ibis, 1870, p. 147.—Idem, Journ. Asiat. Soc. Beng., 1870, p. 61.—Sclat. Proc. of Zool.

Soc. 1870, p. 162, pl. xiv.—Elliot, Mon. of Phas., vol. i. pl. xx.

(Chalcophasis) Sclateri, G. R. Gray, Hand-list of Birds, part ii. p. 261.

In is beyond the eastern extremity of our Indian territories that we must look for the present fine bird, where it will doubtless be found in as great an abundance as the Lophophorus Impeyanus and L. l'Huysi are in their respective habitats. At present, however, as will be seen in the sequel, a single example of this species is all that has yet been discovered. This was brought down from the hills to a country fair in the valley of Assam, where it was seen by the late Dr. Jerdon, who at once perceived that, although in a very indifferent state of plumage, it was an object of great interest and value. From Assam it was safely conveyed to Calcutta, and afterwards to England, where it lived and moulted more than once, in the gardens of the Zoological Society, and where the Fellows and their friends and thousands of visitors had an opportunity of seeing this fine object in a living state. Ornithologists noted that it was very peculiar in its actions and economy, and were at a loss to know why a bird of such moping habits, and of such a heavy and inelegant gait, should have been clothed in so resplendent a dress; yet such is the case, and I quite agree with Mr. Elliot's view when he assigned it a separate distinctive generic title; for it certainly does not assimilate to the Lophophori, whose movements are at once sprightly and attractive.

Time, and time alone, can unfold to us a correct account of this remarkable bird, as it has done of many other of nature's manifold wonders.

Although, as will be seen, Mr. Elliot subsequently changed its generic appellation, he commences his account of the bird by saying:—"This constitutes the third species of the genus Lophophorus, which is distinguished by comprising the most brilliantly coloured of the Phasianidæ. Sclater's Monaul, however, is not so handsome as either of the other two species, being destitute of the greater portion of the metallic hues which cause its relatives to be such attractive objects. The only specimen known, which is now living in the gardens of the Zoological Society of London, was obtained in Upper Assam, described by Dr. Jerdon, and forwarded by him to the Society.

"I am favoured by Dr. Jerdon with the following short account of the species, which comprises all that is known regarding it. 'At Suddya, our frontier station at the head of the valley of Assam, a Nula, or Fair, is held annually in February, to which most of the hill tribes come and are entertained by the Deputy Commissioners of the district at the expense of the Government, and get presents of rum, opium, salt, tobacco, &c. A living specimen of the Ceriornis Blythii was brought down and given to the Deputy Commissioner Major Stewart whilst I was with him, by some of the Mishmi tribes. At the same time and place Major Steward also received one living specimen of the Lophophorus Sclateri. It was in very bad plumage; and though I saw at once it was a distinct species, I could not then describe it. He brought it to Shillong and gave it to Major Montagu. It moulted when in the possession of that gentleman. I was then enabled to describe it briefly in 'The Ibis.' I persuaded Major Montagu to allow me to forward it, in his name, to the Zoological Society. I took charge of it in November, brought it safely to Calcutta, and kept a servant of my own to look after it and the specimen of Ceriornis Blythii until they were put on board a steamer. They were very tame, and fed readily from the hand. They were particularly fond of the leaves of lettuce and cabbage; I fed them with rice and maize.'

"Sclater's Monaul cannot be said to be very graceful: the body is thick and heavy, and the legs short; the head is also large for the size of the bird, causing it to present a rather stupid appearance, quite different from the game-like heads of the other members of this family, and even of those to which it is nearest allied. From its not possessing the lengthened crest which is so characteristic and so elegant an appendage to the other two species of this genus, and also from the peculiar bronze hue of the back, I have deemed it best to include this one in a separate subgeneric division under the appellation of *Chalcophasis*, or

Bronze Pheasant.

"Top of the head covered by a short recurved green crest; occiput, cheeks, throat, and entire underparts deep velvety black; back of the neck red, becoming orange-yellow on the lower part; back and wings metallic green, with blue and purple reflections; shoulders reddish bronze; primaries brownish black; rump white, with narrow black lines running lengthwise in the centre of the feathers; upper tail-coverts white; tail deep chestnut, tipped with white; bare skin of the face deep blue, covered with spots of black hair-like feathers; legs and feet brown; bill greenish horn-colour."

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The front figure is about two thirds of the natural size.