MEGALÆMA FRANKLINII.

Franklin's Barbet.

Bucco Franklinii, Blyth, Journ. Asiat. Soc. Beng., vol. xi. p. 167; vol. xv. p. 13.

Megalaima Franklinii, G. R. Gray, Gen. of Birds, vol. ii. p. 430, Megalaima, sp. 25.—J. E. Gray, Cat. of Spec. and Draw. of Mamm. and Birds pr. to Brit. Mus. by B. H. Hodgson, Esq., p. 114.—Blyth, Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. Calcutta, p. 68.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., tom. i. p. 144, Megalaima, sp. 24.—Tickell, Journ. Asiat. Soc. Beng., vol. xxiv. p. 278.

Bucco igniceps, Hodgs. in Gray's Zool. Misc., 1844, p. 85.

Cyanops Franklinii, Horsf. & Moore, Cat. of Birds in Mus. East Ind. Comp., p. 643.—Jerd. Birds of India, vol. i p. 314.

Kattak-pho, Lepcha (Jerdon).

As there is no other species of Indian Barbet with which this fine bird can be confounded, I am somewhat surprised at the very different descriptions of its notes recorded by two of our best Indian ornithologists, Mr. Jerdon and Major Tickell, the former stating that its cry is something like *kattak-kattak-kattak*, and the latter that the hills resound with its *piow-piow-piow*.

It will be seen that Mr. Hodgson described this bird under the specific name of *igniceps*, a term which, if it could be used, would be a most appropriate one; but the law of priority forbids its adoption, that of *Franklinii* having been applied to it by Mr. Blyth two years earlier. Its native country is the southern slopes of the Eastern Himalayas, particularly Nepaul and Sikhim; varied indeed are the colours of these strange zygodactylous birds, some being of an exceedingly sombre hue, while others have rich green bodies and their heads fantastically decorated with red, blue, and yellow. Unlike most highly decorated birds both sexes are alike in their tints and markings, so much so that dissection is necessary to determine which are males and which are females; the young, during their first autumn, however, are much less adorned, a general uniformity in the green tint prevailing in birds of that age.

The following brief notes are all, I believe, that has yet been recorded respecting this gay species:—

Mr. Jerdon informs us that "this handsome Barbet is very common at Darjeeling at an altitude of from four to eight thousand feet and upwards. Its usual cry is something like *kattak-kattak-kattak*. It lives entirely on fruit, and is found from Nepaul, through Sikim to Assam, Arakan, and Tenasserim, where Tickell says it is much more abundant than at Darjeeling; but Mr. Blyth tells me that during his rambles in Burmah he only met with two species of Barbet, *lineatus* and *indicus*."

Captain Tickell states that this Barbet swarms in the mountainous parts of Tenasserim at an elevation of from three to five thousand feet, not higher nor lower, that from the first level it suddenly and entirely supplants *M. lineata*, and that, as long as day lasts, the woods amongst the Dauna hills resound with its cry piow, piow, piow, &c. Is it not probable that Major Tickell has mistaken the note of some other bird for that of this species? since the Lepcha name is *Kattak-pho*.

Forehead and centre of the occiput scarlet, inclining to crimson; centre of the crown fiery glistening orange; space surrounding the orbit and a broad stripe from above the eye down the side of the neck deep black; chin bright orange, stained near the bill with scarlet, and passing, on the lower part of the throat and ear-coverts, to light-grey; upper surface green, with a lighter edge to many of the feathers; those of the nape lighter and with a glossy stripe down the centre of each; wings and tail dark green; edge and shoulder of the wing deep blue; primaries and secondaries black, the first two or three primaries edged on the basal portion of the external web with green; the rest and the secondaries broadly margined externally with green, and internally with straw-yellow, which is also the colour of the under surface of the shoulder; under surface of the body pale green; bill blackish above, lead-colour beneath, both mandibles becoming nearly white at the base; orbital skin lead-colour; irides brown; legs greenish slate-colour.

The figures are of the natural size.