IYNGIPICUS GYMNOPHTHALMUS.

Ceylonese Pygmy Woodpecker.

Little Brown Woodpecker, Lath. Gen. Syn. Suppl. p. 109 (1787).
Picus moluccensis, var. B, Lath. Ind. Orn. i. p. 234 (1790).
Picus minor, var. Γ, Lath. tom. cit. p. 230 (1790).
Picus gymnophthalmos, Blyth, J. As. Soc. Beng. xviii. p. 804 (1849).—Id. Cat. B. Mus. As. Soc. p. 64 (1849).—Layard, Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. xiii. p. 448 (1854).—Reichenb. Handb. *Scansoriæ, Picinæ*, p. 373 (1854).—Gray, Hand-l. B. ii. p. 184, no. 8578 (1870).
Yungipicus gymnophthalmus, Kelaart, Prodr. Cat. p. 128 (1852).—Jerd. B. Ind. i. p. 279 (1862).—Holdsw. P. Z. S. 1872, p. 427.—Legge, Str. F. 1873, p. 433.—Id. Ibis, 1874, p. 15.—Id. Str. F. 1875, p. 365.—Id. Birds of Ceylon, p. 186 (1879).
Yungipicus gymnophthalmus, Bp. Consp. Volucr. Zygod. p. 8 (1854).—Jerd. Ibis, 1872, p. 8.
Picus gymnophthalmus, Malh. Monogr. Picid. i. p. 153 (1861).—Sundev. Consp. Av. Picin. p. 28 (1866).—Gray, List Picid. Brit. Mus. p. 42 (1868).
Bæopipo gymnophthalma, Cab. & Heine, Mus. Hein. Th. iv. p. 59 (1863).
Iyngipicus gymnophthalmus, Hargitt, Ibis, 1882, p. 47.

The present species and *I. peninsularis* from Southern India are distinguished by their generally uniform under surface. They belong to the plain-breasted section of the genus *Iyngipicus* as set forth by Mr. Hargitt. The latter gentleman, to whose paper on the genus *Iyngipicus* we have been so much indebted for information, has given for the present species the following distinguishing characters :—"The under surface is, as a rule, perfectly uniform, although in young birds there are sometimes a few indications of dusky stripes." We believe that this Woodpecker is peculiar to the island of Ceylon, the bird from Southern India, which has often been confounded with it, being really a different species, with the top of the head brown instead of black. Mr. Hargitt appears to us to have carefully discriminated the synonymy of the two species, and we have followed him in every respect, excepting as regards the figures of *Picus nanus*, given by Malherbe in his monograph, which we believe to be referable, not to *I. gymnophthalmus* of Ceylon, but to *I. peninsularis*. A good account of the habits and distribution is given by Captain Vincent Legge in his 'Birds of Ceylon,' from which the following is extracted :—"This Pygmy Woodpecker is tolerably plentiful in some parts of Ceylon, and has a wide range, being diffused over nearly all the low country, except perhaps the extreme north of the Vanni and the Jaffna peninsula, where it may also possibly occur. It is in the south-west of the island and in the Eastern Province where it is most abundant; in the latter part it is particularly seen about the dead trees standing in the beds of all the newly finished tanks. In the Galle district it is a common bird in localities suited to its habits; and about Colombo it is not uncommon, having been procured by myself as near that town as the cinnamon-gardens of Morotuwa. Layard states that he discovered it near the capital in the year 1848. About Uswewa, near Puttalam, Mr. Parker writes me it is common; beyond this in the Northern Province it is sparingly distributed, as far as I have been able to trace it; but, being difficult of discovery on account of its small size, it may often escape observation in that jungle-clad region. It occurs in the Central Province up to about 3000 feet. I have met with it in Pusselawa, Nilambe, Deltota, and parts of Uva, and I have no doubt it is to be found on the Dimbulla and Dickoya side as well.

"This little bird, which, but for the frequent utterance of its shrill little note, would often completely escape observation, lives generally in pairs, and frequents the uppermost branches of trees, often perching *across them* for a short space of time. I have observed it settle thus on a mere twig, and then after a moment's pause sidle down to an adjoining branch. It works much at the broken tops of small dead branches, picking out worms and grubs from the rotten wood. In Rugam tank I observed it breaking off comparatively large pieces of dead surface-wood and searching beneath them for food. It is very fond of the jack-tree; and in the south of Ceylon I have often seen it in the "Dell" or wild bread-fruit trees (*Artocarpus nobilis*), which stand in low cheena wood, having been spared the axe for the sake of the timber. In the Northern Province I have usually observed it in large trees near rivers and tanks, and in the Kandyan country at the edges of coffee-estates or patnas. Its powers of flight, afforded by its long wings, are considerable, and its note, which is a prolonged trill, is audible at some distance, even when uttered at the tops of the loftiest trees."

The figures in the Plate are drawn from specimens in Captain Wardlaw Ramsay's collection, and represent the birds of the natural size. [R. B. S.]