PALÆORNIS NICOBARICUS.

Nicobar Parrakeet.

Palæornis erythrogenys, Blyth, Journ Asiat. Soc. Beng., vol. xv. pp. 23, 51, 369, and vol. xix. p. 233.—Ib. Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. Calcutta, p. 6.—Horsf. Cat. of Birds in Mus. East Ind. Comp., vol. ii. p. 620. Belurus erythrogenys, Bonap. Rev. et Mag. de Zool. 1854, p. 152.

Like the *Palæornis caniceps*, the present very fine Parrakeet is so extremely scarce, that the single specimen presented by the Asiatic Society of Bengal to the Museum of the East India Company, is the only one that has yet reached this country. It is to Mr. Blyth that we are indebted for our first knowledge of the species, and I should have been happy to adopt his very appropriate name of *erythrogenys*, but unfortunately that appellation having been previously assigned by M. Lesson to a nearly allied bird of the same form, it cannot be retained, and I have therefore proposed that of *Nicobaricus*, as indicative of the country of which it is a native.

On comparing the *Palæornis Nicobaricus* with *P. Luciani*, it will be found that it has a much smaller bill, a larger and greatly elongated tail, the red on the sides of the head confined to the cheeks and earcoverts, and the green of the body of a more lively hue.

Mr. Blyth states that this fine bird "occurs abundantly in the Nicobar Islands," and this, unfortunately, is all that is known respecting it.

The following is Mr. Blyth's description of this species:-

"General colour bright green, more yellowish below, and tinged in the male with hoary greyish-blue on the nape and back; winglet and primaries blue, the latter margined and broadly tipped with green; middle pair of tail-feathers also blue, margined with green for the basal half, and the rest of the tail-feathers chiefly or wholly green above, and all of them dull yellow below; crown emerald-green, and uniformly coloured with the back (save where the latter is tinged with grey); a well-defined narrowish black streak from the nostril to the eye, and a black moustache; lores, cheeks and ear-coverts red; upper mandible coral-red, with a light tip, the lower one black.

"A finer specimen of the male had the nape and interscapularies light yellowish rather than tinged with hoary grey, and the under surface more yellow.

"A still finer male, just deceased, has the cheeks and ear-coverts of a beautiful bright cherry-red.

"The female merely differs in having the crown, nape and back quite uniform green, without the hoary blue tinge conspicuous in the male, and the under mandible more or less black like the upper one."

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The figure represents a male of the natural size. The plant is the Tamarindus officinalis.