PITTA CYANURA.

Blue-tailed Pitta.

Turdus cyanurus, Gmel. edit. Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 828.—Lath. Ind. Orn., vol. i. p. 361.

Myiothera affinis, Horsf. Trans. Linn. Soc., vol. xiii. p. 154.—Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. iii. p. 66.—Less. Man. d'Orn., tom. i. p. 244.

—— cyanura, Cuv. Règne Anim. 1817, vol. i. p. 357.

Pitta cyanura, Vieill. Gal. des Ois., tom. i. p. 246, pl. 153.—Less. Traité d'Orn., p. 394.—Vig. App. Mem. Raffles, p. 659.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 213.—Blyth, Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. Calcutta, p. 159.—Horsf. and Moore, Cat. of Birds in Mus. East Ind. Comp., vol. i. p. 183.—Strickl. in Proc. Zool. Soc., part xiv. p. 100.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., tom. i. p. 256, Pitta, sp. 1.—Id. Consp. Voluc. Anis. 1857, p. 7.—Müll. and Schleg. Verh. Nat. Gesch. Ned. Ind., p. 3.—Elliot, Mon. of Pittidæ, pl. xxix.

Punglor, Java, Horsfield.

Sintar, Sumatra, Raffles.

Manok Paok, Sudanese, Müll. and Schlegel.

Or the numerous members of the present very beautiful family of birds, the comparatively common *Pitta* cyanura must be regarded as one of the most elegant; it is also one of the few species respecting which any information has been placed on record. The following interesting account of the bird, its habits and economy, is taken from the recently published 'Monograph of the Pittidæ,' by Mr. D. G. Elliot of New York, a gentleman deserving the praise of all ornithologists for his labours in their own branch of science:—

"This species," say MM. Müller and Schlegel, "which has hitherto been but seldom met with in Java, is known to the Sudanese in the western part of the island under the name of Manok Paok, while, according to Dr. Horsfield, it is by the real Javanese in the eastern section of the island called Punglor. The first appellation is derived from its cry, which consists of a pretty loud and deep whistling—a kind of shriek, which the males utter at frequent intervals during the morning hours.

"The Pitta cyanura is a mountain-bird, and is but seldom met with in level wooded regions, but is most often seen on old coffee-plantations and in places closely overgrown with shrubbery and seeds, at a height of from 600 to 3000 feet above the level of the sea. It is found usually in the gloomiest spots, and generally on or near the ground.

"It runs very fast, often stopping short for a few moments after each quick forward movement, with either its head bent downward, as if gazing on the ground, or else raised so as to look all around.

"They are often met with in pairs, and frequently also singly. Whenever several birds are together, say five or six, they are invariably in such cases one family, of which the young have but lately left the nest, and for a certain period still remain with the old. When two old males meet, they often fight with each other in the same manner as the Quail and other quarrelsome birds do which are in the habit of dwelling on the ground: as with those species, the time for these battles among the *Pittæ cyanuræ* is generally shortly before their breeding-season, the appointed time for which seems to be from January to May.

"Upon one occasion we discovered near Mount Parang, in the Parang Regencies, a nest of this bird, on the 4th of February, which, like another brought to us a few weeks later, contained five eggs; a third nest with four eggs we found during the month of March, on the western slope of Mount Pangerango; and finally a fourth, with an equal number of eggs, we succeeded in obtaining at the beginning of April.

"The nest is generally built a little above the ground, hardly ever more than from 6 to 8 feet. It is most often placed in a secluded spot among the tough branches of the parasitic orchids growing on the trunk of some old tree. These closely grown plants being frequently damp and mouldy throughout, it follows that occasionally the nest becomes soaked through from beneath. It is constructed without art, but with some solidity, of dry leaves and roots, occasionally interwoven with straws and dried bits of reeds. The eggs, four or five in number, compared with those of European birds, come the nearest to those of the oriolus Galbula, but are of a less oval shape, and subject to many deviations as regards colour. The reddishown and black points and spots, with the brighter marbled colouring frequently observed between the brown and black points and spots, with the brighter marbled colouring is so pale and inspots, accumulate mostly near the larger end of the egg. In some cases the colouring is so pale and inspots, accumulate mostly near the larger end of the egg. In some cases the colouring is so pale and inspots, accumulate mostly near the larger end of the egg. In some cases the colouring is so pale and inspots, accumulate mostly near the larger end of the egg.

being oval, others of a more rounded form.

"On the whole, the *Pitta cyanura* is not of very shy habits, although one is sometimes met with at which it is not easy to get a shot. When chased, they fly along the ground with a strong, free, rapid flight, take it is not easy to get a shot. When chased, they fly along the ground with a strong, free, rapid flight, take it is not easy to get a shot. When chased, they fly along the ground on a projecting stump or upon the branch of refuge at various distances, and alight either near the ground on a projecting stump or upon the branch of