PITTA ATRICAPILLA, *Cuv.*

Black-headed Pitta.

Pitta atricapilla, Cuv.—Müll. Verh. Nat. Gesch. Nederl. Ind., p. 19.
—— *Philippensis*, Vieill.
—— *melanocephala*, Wagl.
—— *brevicauda*, Bodd.—Gray.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 214, *Pitta*, sp. 28.
Corvus brachyurus philippensis, Gmel.
Brachyurus atricapilla, Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 256, *Brachyurus*, sp. 25.—Buff. Pl. Enl., 89.
—— *Mülleri*, Bonap. Consp, Gen. Av., p. 256, *Brachyurus*. sp. 23?

The Indian Islands would seem to be the great stronghold of the members of the beautiful *Pittæ*, for although some of the species are found on the continent of India, by far the greater number of them inhabit the islands running southward from thence to Australia. It will be seen that I have considered the *Pitta Mülleri* as identical with the present bird; if I am wrong in so doing, an opportunity will doubtless occur for my correcting the error. I have now before me several specimens from very distant localities, all so intimately allied, as to leave no doubt in my mind of their being one and the same species. From the collection of T. C. Eyton, Esq., I have a fine adult from China; in the British Museum there are both old and young birds from the Philippine Islands; while in my own collection there is a specimen from Borneo, the latter differing only in being a trifle larger in size than those from more northern localities, the colouring and every mark being precisely the same. If the *Pitta Mülleri* be distinct, it is a bird I have not seen, or my recollection has failed me since I examined the fine series of this group of birds in the splendid Museum at Leyden.

Although the brilliant plumage is acquired almost as soon as the bird has left the nest, considerable difference occurs both in the intensity of the black which covers the head and the extent of the white on the primaries, which is much less than in the adults; moreover, in the youthful state the first and second primaries are in some instances entirely black; and large blotches of white occur on the secondaries, of which there is no trace whatever when the bird has attained its complete livery. A difference is not to be looked for in the colouring of the sexes, for they are alike in this respect, a somewhat smaller size only indicating the female. Dense woods of bamboos, forests bordering hills, and dry stony gullies shrouded from the light, are the favourite resort of this bird, in which respect its habits assimilate to those of its prototypes in Australia, the *Pitta Iris* and *P. strepitans*.

Head and neck deep black; back, scapularies and tertiaries dark grass-green; lesser wing-coverts shining verditer blue; greater coverts light grass-green; primaries white, tipped with brownish black; spurious wing and base of the secondaries deep black; rump and upper tail-coverts shining verditer blue; tail deep black, slightly tipped with green; under surface of the shoulder black; breast, abdomen and flanks green; centre of the abdomen and under tail-coverts blood-red; bill black; feet fleshy brown.

The front figure is of the natural size; the hinder one somewhat reduced.