PITTA MEGARHYNCHA, *Schleg.*

Large-billed Pitta.

Pitta megarhyncha, Schleg. Vög. Nederl. Ind., pl. 4. fig. 2.—Elliot in Ibis, 1870, pp. 408, 409, 414.
Brachyurus megarhynchus, Elliot in Ibis, 1870, pl. xii.

On reference to the opposite plate, where the present bird is represented of life-size, it will be readily seen that it offers a close alliance to *Pitta cyanoptera* and *P. nympha* (that is if the latter be really a species), and more distantly to *P. oreas* and *P. bengalensis*.

The special use of the very large bill with which this bird is furnished has not been ascertained; in all probability it is intended for the breakage of the shells of the mollusks peculiar to the little island whereon the bird is found. Its ochraceous crown, black and well-defined nuchal band, fulvous-white throat, and great black bill have been given as the specific characters of the species; in other particulars (*i. e.* its green back, shining blue shoulders, and upper tail-coverts, the white markings of the first four or five primaries, the buff colouring of the abdomen, and the scarlet under tail-coverts) it resembles *P. cyanoptera*.

Of this well-marked species a single but fine example graces the Museum of Leyden; this unique specimen was kindly transmitted to London for the use of Mr. Elliot in his résumé of the *Pittidæ*, published in 'The Ibis' for 1870. I also was allowed to make a drawing of it for the present work; and I would here record my obligations to Professor Schlegel, the worthy director of the 'Musée de Pays-Bas,' and to Mr. Elliot for the assistance they have thus rendered me.

The following brief remark is all that Mr. Elliot has recorded respecting this bird, and I believe that no one else has written a sentence in any other publication:—

"This bird bears a close resemblance to *P. cyanoptera*, but possesses a bill very different, both in shape and colour, the latter being black. It also differs in having the reddish brown of the head extending to the nape, without being broken by a black bar; the lower part of the neck behind bordered with black."

The Plate represents the same bird in two positions, of the size of life.