

## RHOPOPHILUS PEKINENSIS, *Swinh.*

### Chinese Rhopophilus.

*Drymæca* (?) *pekinensis*, Swinh. in Ibis, 1868, p. 62.

*Rhopophilus pekinensis*, Swinh. in Proc. of Zool. Soc., 1870, pp. 436 & 443, 1871, p. 352.—David, Nouv. Archiv. du Mus., vol. vii., Bull. p. 7.

---

I AM indebted to Mr. Swinhoe for the loan of a fine specimen of this new species, which was procured near Pekin. The following brief note, in which he introduced the bird to the scientific world, is extracted from 'The Ibis' for 1868, pp. 61, 62.

"The second novelty from Pekin belongs to the *Drymæcinæ*, and seems to occupy a place close to *Suya*, from which, however, it differs in having *twelve* rectrices instead of *ten*. I do not know to what restricted genus to refer it, and will, therefore, for the present place it under *Drymæca* in its broad sense. The occurrence of one of this group so far north is so worthy of note that I propose to name this bird *Drymæca* (?) *pekinensis*, sp. nov."

Subsequently, in his communications to the Zoological Society of London, published in their 'Proceedings' above quoted, he speaks of the same bird as *Rhopophilus pekinensis*, but gives no reason for the change of the generic appellation, and does not state whether it is a new term proposed by himself. Indeed, when speaking of a journey north-westwards through the valley to the Black-Dragon temple (which is considered especially sacred by the Pekinese, and twice each year is visited by pilgrims, who make the journey of thirty-five miles from Pekin on foot, prostrating themselves at every step) he merely says, "On the hills we saw small parties of *Rhopophilus pekinensis* (mihi) flitting along the tops of bushes, singing sweetly;" and in a subsequent page, "Near Yunglo's tomb *Rhopophilus pekinensis* was whisking about its long tail on the tops of bushes, uttering a loud whistle. Its eyelid was madder-red, and its irides washed with yellow; upper mandible light brown, lower one yellowish white; legs brownish flesh-colour, tinged with yellow."

The following is Mr. Swinhoe's original description of this bird:—

"Upper parts olive-grey; feathers on crown, back, and rump broadly marked in the middle with black, and tinged with rusty maroon; those of the sides of the neck grey, spotted with rusty; supercilium pale; cheeks brownish, with an indistinct black moustache-streak below the ear-coverts; quills light brown, edged with whitish; two middle tail-feathers olive-grey, brown near the shafts, and edged with whitish; remainder of the tail-feathers blackish brown, edged externally with white, the external one being white at the tip and on its apical outer edge, and the shafts of all white beneath; underparts dingy white, streaked on the sides of the breast and flanks with rusty maroon, the same colour pervading the sides of the abdomen and tibiae, and slightly tinging the belly and vent; axillaries rusty white; the under surface of the wing tinged with the same."

The figures are of the natural size.