

## CASUARIUS WESTERMANNI.

### Westerman's Cassowary.

*Casuarius westermanni*, *Scl. Proc. Zool. Soc.* 1874, p. 247, et 1875, p. 85, pl. xix.—*Scl. Ibis*, 1874, p. 417.—*List Vert. Z. S. L.* p. 423.  
*Casuarius kaupi*, *Scl. P. Z. S.* 1871, p. 627.—*Scl. P. Z. S.* 1872, p. 147, pl. ix.—*Scl. P. Z. S.* 1873, p. 474.

THE following note appears in the 'Proceedings' of the Zoological Society, 1874, p. 247:—"Mr. Sclater called the attention of the Meeting to the Cassowary in the Society's Gardens, received from the Zoological Society of Amsterdam in 1871, and described and figured in the 'Proceedings' for 1872 (p. 147, pl. ix.) under the name *Casuarius kaupi*, which was now a fine adult bird. It now appeared, from Professor Schlegel's remarks in the recently published part of the 'Musée des Pays-Bas,' and from Hr. v. Rosenberg's article in the 'Journal für Ornithologie' for 1874 (p. 390), that there could be no longer any doubt that the name *Casuarius kaupi* of Rosenberg had been founded on a young example of *C. uniappendiculatus*. It remained, therefore, to find another name for the present bird. Mr. Sclater had at first supposed it might be referred to *C. papuanus*; but, judging from the description of this species given by Schlegel (*l. c.*), such could not be the case. He had therefore designated it *Casuarius westermanni*, after the distinguished Director of the Zoological Gardens at Amsterdam, through whom the Society had received their unique specimen."

If the reader will scan over the account accompanying the plate of *C. picticollis*, he may read what has been said on the changes which occur in the Cassowaries, both as regards plumage and the evanescent colouring of the neck. In the young of the same age all the species offer a great degree of similarity; whilst for the adult, both in the form of the helmet and colouring of the naked skin, well-defined characters are always to be found. Of the lesser or Mooruk type the present is the most singular, both as regards colour and form of the helmet, which is extremely curious and interesting; in fact it was of the front face of this bird that, by urgent solicitations, I succeeded in getting our very talented artist, Mr. Wolf, to make a carefully coloured drawing from the living bird; when it died the body was immediately forwarded to me, and the foremost figure in my illustration was taken.

Mr. Sclater tells me that last year (1876) there were two examples of this Cassowary living in the Zoological Gardens at Rotterdam, and that on the occasion of his recent visit this year (May 1877) he found one of them still alive and in fine adult plumage.

Very little has as yet been ascertained respecting the habits and economy of the various species of Cassowary. What has been recorded tends to show that they are forest-loving birds, frequenting the woods of the low countries as well as the mountainous districts, roaming over the open gullies and sunny glades either singly or in small companies. Their food is of a mixed or multifarious character,—fruits, berries, bulbous roots, and the leafy buds of trees forming part of their vegetable diet, the wild fig (which at certain seasons is constantly dropping from the lofty trees) being always searched for and eaten with avidity; while the animal food which serves to maintain their huge bodies is even more varied—reptiles, feeble birds, little mammals, crustaceans, insects, and eggs being among its constituent elements. In their disposition these birds are shy and reclusive, and when disturbed seek shelter in the depths of the thicket. Deprived of the power of flight, they run with great swiftness, their long legs enabling them to pass over great distances in a comparatively short space of time, and by this means to avoid pursuit. The chicks are longitudinally striped with yellowish white; and their large corrugated eggs are of a beautiful green.

*Hab.* New Guinea, vicinity of Havre Dorey.