IRENA CYANOGASTRA, Vigors.

Blue-mantled Fairy Bluebird.

Irena cyanogastra, Vigors, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1831, p. 97.—Gray & Mitchell, Genera of Birds, i. p. 288, pl. 70.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av. i. p. 349.—Cass. United-States Exploring Exped., Aves, p. 143.—Gray, Hand-list of Birds, i. p. 288.—Walden, Trans. Zool. Soc. ix. p. 190.—Sharpe, Cat. Birds, iii. p. 266.—Id. Trans. Linn. Soc. n. ser. Zool., i. p. 352.—Wardlaw Ramsay, Orn. Works of Marquis of Tweeddale, p. 657.

Two species of the genus *Irena* are distinguished by having the under surface of the body blue instead of black. Both these species are confined to the Philippine Archipelago, one of them, the subject of the present article, being an inhabitant of Luzon and Panay, while it is represented in the island of Basilan by *I. melanochlamys*.

Although the present species has been known to science ever since the year 1831, no details have as yet been published of its habits; and I must refer my readers to the accounts published of *Irena puella*, as the habits of all the members of the genus are doubtless similar. If, as Dr. Meyer states, the sexes are alike in plumage, it would differ in this respect from all its allies. Without affirming the absolute correctness of Dr. Meyer's statements, I must admit that of all the specimens examined by me, none have shown any difference in their plumage; but its Basilan representative has the sexes differing in the manner usual with the *Irenæ*.

The following description is copied from Mr. Sharpe's 'Catalogue of Birds:'—

"Adult male. General colour above deep purplish blue, slightly varied on the rump with ashy brown, where the traces of the feathers show through; the scapulars resembling the back; least and median wing-coverts deep cobalt-blue, the greater series black, shading off into deep cobalt at the tip, very slightly on the outermost, conspicuously on the inner ones; primary coverts black, the quills black, the inner secondaries externally deep cobalt like the wing-coverts, the greater upper tail-coverts deep cobalt, brighter than the lower back; tail black, washed with deep purple, more plainly on the centre feathers; crown of head and nape deep cobalt-blue, a little brighter on the fore part of the crown; lores, sides of face and of neck, entire throat, and chest black; rest of under surface deep purplish blue like the back; under tail-coverts deep cobalt-blue; thighs and under wing-coverts brown, washed with purplish blue; iris red. Total length 10 inches, culmen 1·15, wing 5·35, tail 4·4, tarsus 0·85."

The figures in the Plate are of the size of life, and are drawn from specimens in my own collection.

[R. B. S.]