

NECTARINIA INSIGNIS, *Gould.*

Penang Sun-bird.

Nectarinia insignis, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc. 1865, p. 663.

EVERY ornithologist who has turned his attention to the birds of the Old World is aware that the Sun-birds are exceedingly numerous. Tropical Africa abounds with them; they are equally abundant in India from the Himalayas to the most southern point of the peninsula; many inhabit Malasia, Java, Sumatra, and the islands generally to New Guinea and even to Northern Australia. In each of those countries the woods are tenanted and the flora visited by these nectar-loving little birds.

As may be readily imagined, considerable diversity of form is found to exist among them, and consequently they have been subdivided into various genera; in the present work, however, I have retained all the species under the term *Nectarinia*, but have at the same time generally indicated the section or genus to which each has been respectively assigned. The present bird, which is here figured for the first time, belongs to *Arachnechthra*, the members of which are distinguished for having a beautiful flame- or yellow-coloured spot on each side of the chest. *N. Osea*, *N. Asiatica*, and *N. Lotenia* are other examples of this form. I regret to say that nothing is known respecting the present very distinct species. The specimen from which my figure was taken was received direct from Penang by a gentleman in Glasgow, who sent it, together with fine skins of *Polyplectron*, *Harpactes*, *Cymbirhynchus*, &c., to a fishing-tackle maker in London, to be made into Salmon-flies; and I consider myself fortunate that they came under my notice, as I was thereby enabled to rescue the solitary specimen of this lovely bird from such an ignoble fate.

In size the *N. insignis* is intermediate between *N. Lotenia* and *N. Asiatica*, from both of which it differs in the green colouring of its crown, and in the beautiful purple tint of the breast and abdomen.

Crown of the head deep shining green; shoulders, wing-coverts, rump, and upper tail-coverts shining green, tinged with purple; a narrow line down each side of the throat; breast and abdomen rich glossy blue, tinged with purple; chin and centre of the throat rich purplish-red; on each side of the breast a tuft of rich gamboge-yellow feathers; nape and back deep velvety black; primaries and secondaries glossy brownish black; tail rounded at the end, of a deep bluish black, some of the outer feathers narrowly margined externally with shining green; lower part of the abdomen, thighs, and under tail-coverts deep black; flanks smoke-grey; bill and feet black.

The figures are of the size of life, on the *Cælogyne Parishii*.

Since the drawing of this species was printed and the above was written, I have become aware that the term *insignis* had been previously assigned by Sir William Jardine to another member of this family. Under these circumstances I propose the name of *fulgida* for the present bird.