

interior, and patnas in the Central Province. In its nature it is a tame bird, and when scratching for insects, with its handsome crest depressed, allows a near approach without taking flight; when flushed it does not usually fly far, but takes refuge in a neighbouring tree, where it will sit quietly, giving out its soft and melodious call, *hoo-poo, hoo-poo*, accompanied by a movement of its handsome crest and an oscillation to and fro of its head at each note. In Jaffna it may be seen close to the houses of the English residents; and I have known it breed in the garden of a bungalow within a few yards of the verandah. It feeds entirely on the ground, strutting about with an easy gait, and scratching vigorously for insects in dry soil. It often scrutinizes the ordure of cattle, beneath which it finds an abundance of food. . . . There is something very striking in the soft tones of this bird's note when heard amidst the chatter and chirping of the numerous Passerine birds which inhabit the Ceylon coast-jungles. Though perhaps uttered tolerably close to the listener, it seems to be wafted on the wild sea-breezes from afar off, and tends to rivet the sportsman's attention as he is returning to his bivouac beneath the already burning rays of an 8-o'clock sun, after a long morning's shooting in the parched-up scrubs of the northern coast. The flight of this Hoopoe is buoyant but undulating; and when pressed it is able to show considerable powers of wing; for in India a trained Hawk is said generally to fail in seizing it.

"The breeding-season in the north of Ceylon lasts from November until April; and possibly a second brood may be reared later on in the year, as Layard mentions the shooting of young birds in August. It breeds in holes of trees, showing in this respect, as well as in its anatomy, its affinity to the Hornbills. It sometimes, however, chooses a hole in a wall, in which I have known it to nest in the garden of an English residence in the Jaffna fort. Burgess writes, with reference to its habit of building in walls in India, that 'it breeds in the middle of April and May, constructing its nest in holes in the mud walls which surround the towns and villages in the Deccan.' The nest is composed of grass, hemp, and feathers. In the same district a nest made of soft pieces of hemp was found in a fort-wall. Miss Cockburn, again, tells us that at Kotagherry it selects holes in stone walls and in earthen banks to build in, making a mere apology for a nest of a few hairs and leaves, which in a short time has a most offensive smell. This, it is asserted, arises from the oily matter secreted by the sebaceous gland on the tail-bone, which, in the female, at the breeding-time assumes an intolerable stench, whence obtains the idea, according to Jerdon, that the bird constructs its nest of cow-dung."

The eggs of the present species are generally five or six in number; but they vary from three to seven. Mr. Hume states that they are of a pale greyish blue tint; but many are of a pale olive-brown or dingy olive-green, and every intermediate shade of colour is observable.

In the Plate I have figured a specimen from Southern India, and another from Burmah, to show the difference in the length of the bill. Both figures are of the natural size, and are drawn from specimens in my own collection.