

MEROPS PHILIPPINUS, *Linn.*

Philippine Bee-eater.

- Merops Philippinus*, Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 183.—Ib. Gmel. Edit., tom. i. p. 461.—Lath. Ind. Orn., tom. i. p. 271.—Vieill. Ency. Méth. Orn., part i. p. 275.—Gray, Cat. of Birds in Coll. Brit. Mus., part ii. sec. 1. p. 69.—Ib., Cat. of Spec. and Draw. of Mamm. and Birds presented to Brit. Mus. by B. H. Hodgson, Esq., p. 57.—Jerdon, in Madras Journ. of Lit. and Sci., vol. xi. p. 228.—Blyth, Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. of Calcutta, p. 52.—Horsf. Cat. of Birds in Mus. East Ind. Comp., vol. i. p. 86.—Layard, Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist., vol. xii. 2nd ser. p. 173.
- Apiaster philippensis minor*, Briss. Orn., tom. iv. p. 560. pl. xliii. fig. 1.
- Grand Guépier des Philippines*, Buff. Pl. Enl. 57.
- Guépier vert à queue d'azur*, Buff. Hist. Nat. des Ois., tom. vi. p. 404.
- Philippine Bee-eater*, Lath. Gen. Syn., vol. ii. p. 674.—Shaw, Gen. Zool., vol. viii. p. 165.—Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. iv. p. 129.
- Merops Daudini*, Cuv. Règn. Anim. (1829) tom. i. p. 442.
- *typicus*, Hodgs., Gray, Zool. Misc. (1844) p. 82.
- *Javanicus*, Horsf. Trans. Linn. Soc., vol. xiii. p. 171.—Raffles, Trans. Linn. Soc., vol. xiii. p. 294.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 86, *Merops*, sp. 9.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 162, *Merops*, sp. 14.
- Javan Bee-eater*, Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. iv. p. 132.
- Kachangan*, Javanese, Horsfield.
- Biri-biri* or *Barai-barai*, Sumatrans, Raffles.
- Berray-berray*, Malays, Eyton.
- Boro-putringa*, Hindoos, Dr. F. B. Hamilton.
- Bans-putter*, Bengalese, Ib.
- Putrainga*, Capt. Boys.
- Kattalan cooroovi*, Mal.; lit. "Aloe Bird," (from a fanciful resemblance in the tail of the bird to the aloe plant,) Layard.

THIS species of Bee-eater, although less common than the Hurrial (*Merops viridis*), is nevertheless very generally dispersed over the Continent of India, with the exception of Scinde and the North-Western provinces, where I believe it is seldom and perhaps never seen; in the Madras Presidency and Ceylon it is very common, and in Tenasserim and the Malay countries generally, it is still more numerous; most of the collections from Singapore contain examples; it is also found in Java and Sumatra, and, as its name implies, in the Philippines. It is a very fine and elegantly formed species, and if its markings be less strongly defined than in some other members of the genus, it must still be one of the most showy and attractive birds of its native forests, particularly when seen in such numbers as are mentioned by Mr. Jerdon in the following note, which, as well as the others I have taken the liberty of transcribing, I have thought it but right to give in the words of the respective writers.

"This bird," says Mr. Jerdon, "prefers a well-wooded country, and I have seen it in Goomsoor in open parts of the jungle, and on the west coast occasionally in similar situations. It is almost always found in small parties seated on the tops of high trees, frequently among wet paddy-fields, and in general, perhaps, making a much longer circuit than the *M. viridis*, capturing several insects before returning to its perch. I have on one or two occasions seen it perched on a low palisade overhanging some water, and every now and then picking an insect off the surface. I once saw an immense flock of them at Caroor, in the Carnatic (Coimbatore district), and in the beginning of March there were many thousands of them perched on the lofty trees lining the road there, which sallied forth for half-an-hour or so, making a great circuit before returning. These birds were most probably those which had been spread over great part of that country, now collected to migrate into a more wooded region during the approaching hot season, when insect life is scarce. Like the *M. viridis*, this has a loud and pleasing sort of whistle, but more full and mellow."

"I first observed this bird," states Capt. Boys, "at Mandoo in Malwa, in the month of May 1837; since then I have seen it at Cawnpore, Sultanpore and at Ferozepore, where, on the 17th of May 1846, I killed