

DENDROCHELIDON MYSTACEUS.

Bearded Tree Swift.

Cypselus mystaceus, Less. Voy. de la Coq., Ois., t. 22.

Macropteryx mystaceus, Swains. Class. of Birds, vol. ii. p. 340.—Gray, List of Birds in Brit. Mus., part ii. sect. i.

Fissirostres, p. 17.—Ib. Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xxvi. p. 170.

Apus mystaceus, Less. Traité d'Orn., p. 268.

— (*Pallestre*) *mystaceus*, Less. Compl. Buff., tom. viii. p. 491.

Dendrochelidon mystaceus, Boie, Isis, 1844, p. 166.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 66, *Dendrochelidon*, sp. 5.—Ib. Rivista Contemporanea, Feb. 1857, p.

THIS truly magnificent Tree Swift—the largest member of its genus—was first made known to us by M. Lesson, and afterwards figured in that fine French work the “Voyage de la Coquille.” In the size of its body and in the great length of its wings, it so far exceeds all the other known species, that it cannot possibly be confounded with either of them. Its true habitats are the Aru Islands and New Guinea, to which countries it would seem to be confined; for, although its lengthened wings and consequent great powers of flight would lead to the supposition that it enjoys a wide range from these centres, we have no positive evidence that such is the case, none but the French voyagers and Mr. Wallace having obtained specimens. It is to Mr. Wallace more particularly that we are indebted for the numerous examples which have lately been transmitted to this country; these were not only shot, but were also dissected by this intrepid traveller; and thus we learn, from the labels which are carefully attached to each specimen, that those having the chestnut spot on the ear-coverts are males, and those in which this mark is wanting are females. At some future time we may hope to be gratified by receiving some account of the habits of this noble bird, as, second to the transmission of specimens, such an account would be of the greatest interest.

The male has the crown, wings, and tail steel-blue, tinged with white or greyish white on the tertiaries; the outer webs of the external feathers are also grey near their bases; lores black; above and below the eye a stripe of white extending into lengthened plumes; ear-coverts grey, immediately below which is a spot of chestnut; back, rump, throat, sides of the neck, chest, and flanks greenish grey; centre of the abdomen and under tail-coverts greyish white; bill and legs olive-black.

Total length, 13 inches; bill, $\frac{9}{16}$; wing, $8\frac{1}{2}$; tail, 8; tarsi, $\frac{3}{8}$.

The female, according to the labels on Mr. Wallace's specimens, resembles her mate, but is destitute of the chestnut throat and ear-mark.

The Plate represents both sexes of the natural size.