

CYPSELUS INFUMATUS, *Sclat.*

Palm-roof Swift.

- Cypselus infumatus*, Sclat. in Proc. Zool. Soc., 1865, p. 602.—Jerd. in Ibis, 1871, p. 355, pl. x.—Swinh. in Proc. Zool. Soc., 1871, p. 345.—Gray, Hand-list of Birds, part i. p. 64.
 ——— *tinus*, Swinh. in Ibis, 1870, p. 90.
 ——— *tectorum*, Jerd. Proc. of Asiat. Soc. Calcutta, 1870, p. 71.—Godwin-Austen, Cat. of Birds in Journ. Asiat. Soc., 1870, p. 94.

I AM indebted to Mr. Jerdon for the loan of a specimen of this little Swift, which, as will be seen above, has already received three specific names, that proposed by Mr. Sclater having the priority. When characterizing it this gentleman remarked:—"I have as yet seen but a single example of this species, now in Mr. Wallace's possession. It formed part of the collection made by the late Mr. Mottley at Banjermassing, in Borneo, for Mr. L. L. Dillwyn. It is decidedly a *Cypselus*, allied to *C. batassiensis* of India. I have searched in vain for this species among the treasures of the Leyden Museum."

Besides Borneo, it has also been found in India, where Mr. Jerdon informs us, in 'The Ibis' for 1871, that "Major Godwin-Austen procured this interesting Swift on the Naga hills, and subsequently on the Garo hills, where it had also been obtained by a native collector employed by Dr. Anderson. The Garo hills are a direct continuation of the Naga hills—the Khasia and Jyntea hills, however, intervening, where this Swift is not known. The more highly civilized Khasi race have better houses than their neighbours on each side, who use huts thatched with palm-leaves; on these roofs this Palm-Swift invariably builds its nest. Mr. Hume, who saw the specimen I was taking home, subsequently identified it, doubtfully, with Sclater's *C. infumatus*; and on comparison of the unique specimen existing in England of that Swift, they were found to be identical, and Mr. Hume's ingenious surmise proved correct."

Mr. Swinhoe also includes it in his list of the Birds of China, and, speaking of it in 'The Ibis' for 1870 under the name of *Cypselus tinus*, which, believing it to be a new species, he there assigned to it, says:—"I first noticed this little species at Tai-ping-sze (Central Hainan), where a single pair passed over my head, and I shot one. Among the cocoa-nut trees on the sandbanks of Lingshuy lagoon (S.E. Hainan) they were common enough, and we procured several. It was the 10th of March; but there did not appear any signs of nidification. On the 18th of March, at Nychow (S. Hainan), I again saw numbers of them flying backwards and forwards over a wood near the city.

"This species is of the same typical form as *C. batassiensis*, Gray, of India and Burmah, but is smaller and more deeply coloured, with a shorter and narrower bill, longer wings, and less forked tail. It appears to be a good second species of the Palm-Swift type, which connects *Cypselus* with *Collocalia*."

In his 'Revised Catalogue of the Birds of China and its Islands,' Mr. Swinhoe remarks:—"I have compared my specimens with Dr. Jerdon's type from Upper Assam, and with Dr. Sclater's type from Borneo in Mr. Wallace's collection, and find them all to be of the same species."

The courtesy of Major Godwin-Austen having induced him to permit my copying a drawing representing the bungalows, or native dwelling-places, under which this bird builds, I am enabled to render the opposite Plate much more interesting than it could otherwise have been. Such sketches are in the highest degree useful to the ornithologist; and it is to be regretted that similar illustrations of the breeding-habits of birds are not more frequently made.

The following is Mr. Swinhoe's description and admeasurements of this little Swift:—

"Above deep sepia-brown, with a slight deep-green iridescence; rump lighter, beneath much brighter; wings and tail brownish black, the former with pale inner edges; between the bill and the eye a whitish spot; bill and legs blackish brown, with a pink tinge; iris deep hazel.

"Length about 4.5; wing 4.75; first quill attenuating to the tip, and .25 in. shorter than the second; tail 2.25, middle rectrices .875 shorter than the laterals.

"The female is a trifle shorter in the wing, but is otherwise similar to the male."

Dr. Jerdon's specimen, from which my figures were taken, was darker than those described by Mr. Swinhoe; but as he states that he has carefully compared them, I must also consider them identical; probably the examples were procured at different seasons; or the variation may be due to age.

The Plate represents this bird of the size of life.