

SPIZAËTUS ALBONIGER, *Blyth.*

Nisaëtus alboniger, Blyth, Journ. Asiat. Soc. Beng., vol. xiv. p. 173.

Spizaëtus alboniger, Blyth, Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. Calcutta, p. 26.

———— *borneonensis*, Gray, List of Birds in Coll. Brit. Mus., 2nd edit. part 1, *Accipitres*, p. 16.

THERE is no one section of the Falconidæ respecting the habits and economy of which we know so little as of the Crested Eagles forming the genus *Spizaëtus*; the synonymy, too, of the various species has not been so clearly defined as might be desired; I have not hesitated, therefore, to seek the aid of a gentleman (J. H. Gurney, Esq.) who has devoted much of his attention for many years to the birds of the Raptorial order; and this aid has been most courteously accorded to me, in the form of a monograph of the Indian species, which I consider I may most appropriately publish as an accompaniment to my illustration of the *Spizaëtus alboniger*. I must, at the same time, thank Mr. Gurney for permission to copy Mr. Wolt's spirited sketch, which represents the adult and young of this species as nearly three-fourths the natural size as may be.

The following are Mr. Gurney's observations:—

“*Spizaëtus alboniger*, Blyth; *S. borneonensis*, Gray.—This very distinct species, the smallest of the Asiatic *Spizaëti* with which we are at present acquainted, was first described by Mr. Blyth (A. D. 1845) in the fourteenth volume of the ‘Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,’ p. 173, in the following terms:—‘A smaller species than either of those from India, measuring about $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length; wing 13 inches, and tail $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches; tarsus 3 inches; occipital crest $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Adult:—black above, with a purple gloss; the large alars embrowned, and distinctly banded with black; tail black, with a broad, light greyish brown bar occupying about its third quarter from the base; the longer upper tail-coverts have each two cross-bands of the same; lower parts pure white, with a black mesial line on throat; large intense black drops on the breast. The belly, vent, lower tail-coverts, tibial plumes, and short tarsal feathers are throughout closely barred black and white; beak black, and toes wax-yellow. A younger specimen has the drops fewer and smaller on the breast, an admixture of rufous about the head, several unmoulted brown feathers among the wing-coverts, and one unmoulted tail-feather which has three narrowish dark bars, with two or more at the base, closer and less defined: a remarkably handsome species from Malacca, the Tenasserim provinces, and Borneo.

“The two specimens now figured are in the collection of the Norwich Museum; the adult was obtained from Singapore through the intervention of H. F. Barclay, Esq.; the immature bird was presented by the late Captain Glasspoole, who obtained it in the course of one of his voyages to the East, but the exact locality from whence it was procured is not recorded.

“The following species are also found on the continent of Asia and in the adjacent islands:—

“*SPIZAËTUS LANCEOLATUS*, Temminck & Schlegel, Fauna Japonica, p. 7.

“———— *fasciolatus*, Schlegel, Muséum des Pays Bas, p. 9.

Professor Schlegel, though citing the above synonym for this species, appears to doubt its being specifically distinct; it is, however, a very well-defined species, differing from *S. alboniger* in its larger size, in the absence of a crest, and in the strong rufous colouring of the upper portion of the breast in the adult bird. It inhabits the Celebes, and, according to the authors of the ‘Fauna Japonica,’ is also found in Borneo. This species, of which the British and Norwich Museums contain fine examples, brought from the Celebes by Mr. Wallace, has not yet been figured.

“*SPIZAËTUS KIENERI*, De Sparre, Magasin de Zoologie, 1835, pl. 35 (adult).

“A specimen in immature plumage, said to have been killed on the coast of Scotland, near Aberdeen, in the year 1828, is figured in Jardine and Selby's ‘Illustrations of Ornithology,’ pl. 66. This species has been observed in Northern and in Central India, and it also occurs in the islands of Java and Borneo; but both there and in India it appears to be a bird of considerable rarity.

“*SPIZAËTUS PHILIPPENSIS*.—This specific name I would propose for a species of *Spizaëtus* inhabiting the Philippine Islands, which appears to me to be undoubtedly distinct, though not admitted as such by Professor Schlegel, who is disposed to consider it as referable to *S. Kieneri* (*vide* Muséum des Pays Bas, p. 12), an opinion in which I am unable to agree. As this *Spizaëtus* is at present unfigured, I add the description of a specimen in the Norwich Museum, which I suppose to be an adult female:—

“Total length 25 inches; wing, from carpal joint, $14\frac{3}{4}$; tail $11\frac{1}{2}$; crest $2\frac{1}{2}$; tarsus $3\frac{1}{2}$; middle toe and claw 3.

“The general colour of the upper surface in this species is a dark umber-brown; but the base of the feathers of the crest is white, and the margins of the other occipital feathers are of a light yellowish brown. Some of the scapulars and upper alar feathers (especially the latter) are slightly tipped with the same; the tail, which is of a somewhat lighter brown than the back, is tipped with a very narrow edging of white, and is