

## ECLECTUS POLYCHLORUS.

### Green Lory.

- Psittacus polychlorus*, Scopoli, Del. Faun. et Flor. Insubr. ii. p. 87 (1786).  
*Psittacus sinensis*, Gmelin, S. N. i. p. 337 (1788).  
*Psittacus magnus*, Gmelin, S. N. i. p. 344 (1788).  
*Psittacus viridis*, Latham, Index Orn. i. p. 125 (1790).  
*Psittacus lateralis*, Shaw, Gen. Zool. viii. p. 490 (1811).  
*Mascarinus prasinus*, Lesson, Traité, p. 188 (1831).  
*Eclectus linnæi*, Wagler, Monogr. Psittac. p. 571, pl. xxii. (1832).  
*Eclectus polychlorus*, Gray, Genera of Birds, ii. p. 418 (1845).—Id. List Psittacidæ Brit. Mus. p. 66 (1859).  
*Eclectus puniceus*, Bonap. P. Z. S. 1849, p. 142.—Rosenb. J. f. O. 1864, p. 114.  
*Eclectus grandis*, Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av. i. p. 4 (1850).—Id. Rev. et Mag. de Zool. 1854, p. 155.  
*Eclectus westermanni*, Bp. Consp. i. p. 4 (1850).  
*Eos puniceus*, Lichtenstein, Nomencl. Av. p. 71 (1854).  
*Polychlorus magnus*, Sclater, P. Z. S. 1857, p. 226.  
*Mascarinus polychlorus*, Finsch, Nederl. Tijdsch. Berigten, p. xvi. (1863).  
*Psittacodis magna*, Rosenb. Tijdschr. Nederl. Indië, 1863, p. 226.—Id. J. f. O. 1864, p. 114.  
*Psittacus linnæi*, Finsch, Neu-Guinea, p. 157 (1865).

WERE any thing required to assure the student of ornithology that there is still plenty of work to do in the science, the history of the present bird would afford a text for a discourse on that subject. A cage-bird in every menagerie of any repute, described and figured over and over again during the last hundred years, and for the last twenty years by no means rare in collections, the present species might have been supposed to have been well understood. No one, therefore, was prepared for the astounding assertion made by Dr. Meyer in 1874, that the Lories of the Moluccas, considered by everybody to represent many distinct species, were nothing but the males and females of perhaps three. I candidly confess that I was for a long time extremely sceptical on the subject; but after examining specimens sent me by Dr. Meyer, I must admit that he is perfectly right, and that this curious fact must be accepted by ornithologists. The story comes better from Dr. Meyer himself than from me; and I therefore give the note which he has just forwarded:—

“ ‘ When crossing the sea from the Island of Mafoor to the Island of Mysore, in Geelvink Bay, in the year 1873, having spread out before me, on board of my small vessel, the ornithological harvest which I had reaped on Mafoor, it struck me that all the specimens of *Eclectus polychlorus*, Scop., were labelled as males, and all those of *E. linnæi*, Wagler, as females; and I had six green males (*polychlorus*) and nine red females (*linnæi*). The suspicion then arose in my mind that it could not have been by chance that I had only shot the males of *E. polychlorus* and the females of *E. linnæi*.’

“ With these words of introduction I commenced the first paper which I published on the sexual differences in the genus *Eclectus*, in the year 1874 (Verh. d. zool.-bot. Ges. Wien, 1874, p. 179, and Zool. Garten, May 1874, p. 161). Since then I have been obliged to write three more notes on the same subject, because at first the opinion that the green parrots are indeed the males of the red ones was almost universally contested. Nevertheless I already said in my first paper (*l. c.*), ‘ The fact, discovered by myself, is thoroughly ascertained, and cannot be doubted.’

“ In my second note (Mitth. d. k. zool. Mus. Dresden, i. p. 11, 1875) I chiefly disputed Prof. Schlegel’s view, who had promulgated the following opinion, and supposed it to be well founded:—‘ Adopting this hypothesis, we should be obliged in the meantime to accuse of negligence four of our most experienced travellers; and to establish among the parrots the quite exceptional case of a singular sexual difference would be the more remarkable, as it would besides offer in the females variations constant according to the localities’ (Mus. d’Hist. Nat. des Pays-Bas, Psitt. 1874, p. 17). By the four most experienced travellers of the Leiden Museum, Prof. Schlegel meant, as far as I am aware, Salomon Müller, Dr. Bernstein, Hoedt, and Von Rosenberg. But I proved that even the facts published in the Catalogues of the Leiden Museum show that I am right, as, for instance, among seven specimens of *E. intermedius* (green) six are marked as males and only one as a female; and, on the other hand, among fourteen specimens of *E. grandis* (red)