

## NASITERNA BRUIJNII, *Salvad.*

### Bruijn's Pygmy Parrot.

*Nasiterna bruijnii*, *Salvad. Ann. Mus. Civic. Genov.* vii. pp. 715 (note), 753. sp. 13, pl. xxi. p. 907 (1875).—*Sclater, Ibis*, 1876, p. 255.—*Salvad. Ann. Mus. Civic. Genov.* x. p. 25. sp. 8 (1877).

THIS is the most beautiful of the Pygmy Parrots, and is altogether a lovely little bird. It seems to have escaped the observations both of Dr. Meyer and Signor D'Albertis, but was discovered by the collectors of Heer Bruijn, whose name is now so famous for the wonderful novelties collected by his means in North-western New Guinea. But I must let Count Salvadori tell the story of his little favourite, though I here take the opportunity of returning him my most cordial thanks for an act of liberality not easily to be forgotten. During a recent visit to London he showed me a series of these Pygmy Parrots; and on my asking permission to figure them in the present work he not only acceded to my request, but furnished me with the full synonymy of the species, as it is about to be published by him in his work on the ornithology of the Moluccan and Papuan Islands.

Concerning *Nasiterna bruijnii* he writes to me:—"This species was discovered by the men employed by Mr. Bruijn in the Arfak Mountains, where they first obtained a male bird: afterwards Beccari and Bruijn's hunters got some more male specimens, and also succeeded in procuring the female. Both sexes have been described by me; and I have seen altogether nine specimens.

"The males, according as they are more or less adult, vary a little as regards the red colour of the pileum and of the cheeks, being more or less brilliant on these parts; some (among them the type) have these parts dull fulvous tinged with rosy red: a young bird, not sexed, is like the females, only smaller. The bill of this species is very small.

"Nothing is known about the habits of this the most beautiful species of the genus *Nasiterna*; but in all probability it is found in the mountainous districts only."

The following description is from Count Salvadori's MSS.:—

"*Male*. Green, the feathers narrowly edged with black; primaries and anterior secondaries blackish, edged with green; wing-coverts black, with rather wide green edges; pileum, cheeks, and middle of the under parts, with the under tail-coverts bright red, the red pileum changing into brown towards the occiput, and surrounded by a bright blue band, which, from the nape, encircling the red cheeks, extends down to the throat, whence it descends on the sides of the breast; the two middle tail-feathers blue, with a round black spot near the tip; the other rectrices are black, with a red-orange spot on the tip of the inner web; the outer tail-feathers have the outer web partly bluish; bill and feet horny grey.

"*Female*. The upper parts green; the underparts also green, but inclining to yellowish along the middle and on the under tail-coverts; pileum bright blue; forehead whitish; cheeks pale reddish, the throat slightly washed with blue; the wings and the tail as in the male; but the lateral tail-feathers have the spots at the tip orange-yellow. Total length 3·7 inches, wing 2·9–2·7, tail 1·2–1·1, bill from the forehead 0·4."

With regard to the Plate of this bird I have indulged my memory a little, having seen thousands of pairs of not distantly allied species in the space of as many yards in the interior of Australia, breeding in the spouts of the decayed branches of the gum-tree. The upper pair of birds in this case are supposed to be already mated, while the lower pair are represented in the act of courtship.