

NASITERNA PYGMÆA.

Pygmy Parrot.

- Psittacus (Psittacula) pygmæus*, Quoy & Gaim. Voy. de l'Astrol. Zool. i. (1830) p. 232, pl. 21. fig. 1 (♂ juv.), fig. 2 (♀).
- Nasiterna pygmæa*, Wagler, Monogr. Psitt. p. 631 (1832).—Gray, Gen. B. ii. p. 423 (1846).—Bp. Consp. i. p. 6 (1850).—Id. Rev. et Mag. de Zool. 1854, p. 156.—Id. in Naumannia, 1856, Extrah. iv.—Slater, Proc. Linn. Soc. ii. p. 166 (1858).—Gray, P. Z. S. 1858, p. 195.—Id. List Psitt. Brit. Mus. p. 52 (1859).—Id. Cat. B. New Guinea, pp. 43, 60 (1859).—Id. P. Z. S. 1861, p. 437.—Schl. J. f. O. 1861, p. 377.—Rosenb. *op. cit.* 1862, pp. 63, 64, 68.—Wall. P. Z. S. 1862, p. 165, 1864, pp. 281, 293.—Rosenb. Tijdschr. Ned. Ind. xxv. p. 226 (1863).—Id. J. f. O. 1863, p. 226.—Bernst. Tijdschr. Ned. Ind. xxvii. p. 297 (1864).—Id. N. T. D. ii. p. 327 (1865).—Finsch, Neu-Guinea, p. 158 (1865).—Schl. N. T. D. iii. p. 331 (1866, pt.).—Finsch, Papag. i. p. 325 (1867).—Gray, Hand-l. B. ii. p. 168 (1870).—Schl. N. T. D. iv. pp. 5, 7 (1871, pt.).—Id. Mus. P.-B. Psittaci, Revue, p. 71 (1874).—Meyer, Sitz. Isis Dresd. 1875, p. 76.—Rosenb. Reist. naar Geelvinkb. p. 56 (1875).—Salvad. Ann. Mus. Civic. Genov. vii. p. 985 (1875).—Rowley, P. Z. S. 1875, p. 470.—Id. Orn. Miscell. 1876, p. 154, pl. xix. (♂), pl. xx. (♀).—Finsch, *t. c.* p. 161 (1876).—Salvad. Ann. Mus. Civic. Genov. x. p. 25 (1877).
- Micropsitta pygmæa*, Less. Compl. Buff. Ois. p. 607, pl., fig. 2 (1838).
- Micropsites pygmæus*, Bourj. Perroq. pl. c. (1837-38).
- Psittacus pygmæus*, S. Müll. Verh. Land- en Volkenk. pp. 22, 107 (1839-44).—Schl. Handl. Dierk. i. p. 480, pl. iii. no. 37 (1858).
- Psittacus (Nasiterna) pygmæus*, Schl. Handl. Dierk. i. p. 185 (1858).
- Psittacula pygmæa*, Schl. Dient. p. 67, cum fig. (1864).—Id. Mus. P.-B. Psittaci, p. 74 (1864).

Of the very singular group of diminutive Parrots the *N. pygmæa* is the oldest known; and a considerable interval of time elapsed before an addition was made by the discovery of the *N. pusio*. The later explorations, however, that have been made in New Guinea and its surrounding satellites have rewarded travellers with at least four or five others, to which Professor Schlegel, Dr. Meyer, Count Salvadori, and others have applied specific appellations. That more still remain hidden in the forests of Papuana is probable. Up to this time (1878) I consider there are seven species only for me to deal with in the present work. These have many characteristics in common:—first, their very diminutive size and disproportionately large bills when contrasted with the body; the structure of their feet and greatly prolonged outer hind toe are peculiarities, as is also the spiny terminations of the four or six central tail-feathers. The group to which the *Nasiternæ* are most nearly allied appears to me to be *Cyclopsitta*, a section of little Parrots inhabiting the same country. Although all the species of *Nasiterna* are remarkable for their tiny size, and a somewhat general resemblance reigns throughout the whole group, yet differences are to be detected. These distinctions may be readily seen by turning to the various Plates representing the species, and be rendered more intelligible than by written explanations.

Count Salvadori, who has in the most liberal manner forwarded me all the information and synonymy of the present group of birds, extracted from his forthcoming work on the ornithology of New Guinea, has also kindly sent me notes on the several species. "This Parrot (*Nasiterna pygmæa*) inhabits New Guinea, Salwatty, Waigiou, Guebeh, Mysol, and Koffiao. In New Guinea it has been found near Dorey, where it was first discovered, as well as in the neighbourhood of Andai, Dorey-Hum, and Mtanata. I have seen specimens from all these localities. The late Mr. G. R. Gray mentions the Louisiade archipelago as one of the habitats; but if a *Nasiterna* really occurs there, it would doubtless be specifically distinct. The same may be said of the island of Jobi, where Von Rosenberg asserts the existence of *N. pygmæa*, though no specimen of a *Nasiterna* from that island is contained in the Leiden Museum.

"I lately examined the two specimens in the latter collection from the Aru Islands, mentioned by Schlegel as differing from those of New Guinea in the ochraceous yellow colour of the pileum. These specimens, which were in rather bad condition, seemed to me to be not different from my *N. keiensis*; and if this proves to be the case, the latter name is not a very appropriate one for the species.