

PSITTEUTELES SUBPLACENS.

Green-backed Lorikeet.

Trichoglossus subplacens, Slater, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1876, p. 519.

THE present lovely Lorikeet, lately discovered by Signor D'Albertis on the south coast of New Guinea, may dispute the palm of beauty with the well-known *Psitteuteles placens*, so generally considered one of the finest of the family. As regards colour, *P. subplacens* has even a more beautiful tail than its near ally; and the markings of this organ are still more vivid. The greatest difference, however, is in the colouring of the back, which is uniform green, while on the back of *P. placens* a conspicuous mark of blue breaks the uniformity of this part; lastly, although the crown in both is of a different colour from the hinder neck, it is much brighter and better-defined in the new bird. We have now five very distinct Lorikeets which are not second in beauty when compared with any other section of the family. These five species are *Psitteuteles placens*, *P. subplacens*, *P. arfaki*, *P. rubronotatus*, and the elegant *P. wilhelminæ*. A question now arises in my mind, Are there others of the genus yet to be discovered? or is five the normal number, as is the case with many other little groups to which generic appellations have been given? With regard to the sexual differences in colour, we find the usual distinctive marks in the male and female; that is, the ear-coverts are blue in the former, whilst they are yellow in the latter, which may be readily seen by reference to the Plates.

The following is taken from Mr. Slater's paper in the 'Proceedings' of the Zoological Society as above quoted:—"Extracts were read from letters received from Signor L. M. D'Albertis, C.M.Z.S., dated Sydney, March 27th," 1876.

He "also exhibited a small collection of bird-skins collected at Yule Island and on the adjoining coast of New Guinea, which that gentleman had transmitted to him for examination.

"Mr. Slater stated that, the collection having been only just received, he had not had time to examine it carefully, but took the opportunity of pointing out the characters of two apparently new species of Parrots," of one of which the description is as follows:—

"*TRICHOGLOSSUS SUBPLACENS*, sp. nov.

"*Psittaceo-viridis, pileo summo flavicante; macula magna auriculari utrinque cærulea; subtus dilutior, lateribus et alarum tectricibus inferioribus coccineis; remigum pagina inferiore nigra fascia flava intersecta; rectricibus ad basin coccineis, inde nigris flavo terminatis, harum duabus mediis supra viridibus subtus nigris, linea media coccinea versus apicem occupatis; rostro rubro; pedibus rubro-flavidis: long. tota 6·5, alæ 3·5, caudæ 2·8.*

"*Hab.* Mountains of Naiabui, south of New Guinea (*D'Albertis et Tomasinelli*)."

The Plate represents a male and a female, of the natural size; and I am indebted to the kindness of Dr. Slater for shewing me these birds and allowing me to figure them.