

PODARGUS OCELLATUS, Quoy & Gaim.

Ocellated Goatsucker.

- Podargus ocellatus*, Quoy et Gaim. Voy. Astrol. i. p. 208, pl. 14 (1830).—Less. Compl. de Buffon, Ois. p. 435 (1838).—Gray, Gen. B. i. p. 45 (1846).—Bp. Consp. Av. i. p. 58 (1850).—Id. Parall. Cant. Fissir. Vol. Hianti e Nott. ovvero Insidenti, p. 8 (1857).—Scl. Journ. Linn. Soc. ii. p. 155 (1858).—Gray, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1858, pp. 170, 189.—Id. Cat. B. New Guin. pp. 17, 54 (1859).—Id. Proc. Zool. Soc. 1861, p. 433.—Rosenb. J. f. O. 1864, p. 117.—Finsch, Neu-Guinea, p. 162 (1865).—Schl. Nederl. Tijdschr. Dierk. iii. pp. 340, 341 (1866).—Rosenb. Reis naar Zuidoostereil. p. 36 (1867).—Gray, Hand-list of Birds, i. p. 54, no. 588 (1869).—Meyer, Sitz. k. Akad. der Wissensch. Wien, lxix. p. 209 (1874).—Salvad. Ann. Mus. Civ. Gen. ix. p. 23 (1876), x. p. 309 (1877).—D'Alb. et Salvad. op. cit. xiv. p. 54 (1879).—Salvad. Uccelli di Papuasias e delle Molucche, i. p. 518 (1880).
- Podargus superciliaris*, Gray, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1861, pp. 428, 433, pl. 42.—Finsch, Neu-Guinea, p. 162 (1865).—Schl. Nederl. Tijdschr. Dierk. iii. p. 341 (1866).—Gray, Hand-list of Birds, i. p. 51, no. 590 (1869).—Meyer, Sitz. k. Akad. Wissensch. Wien, lxix. p. 209 (1874).
- Podargus marmoratus*, Gould, B. Austr. Suppl. pl. 4.—Gray, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1859, p. 154.—Id. op. cit. 1861, p. 433.—Finsch, Neu-Guinea, p. 162 (1865).—Schl. Nederl. Tijdschr. Dierk. iii. p. 341 (1866).—Gray, Hand-list of Birds, i. p. 54, no. 589 (1869).—Meyer, Sitz. k. Akad. Wissensch. Wien, lxix. p. 209 (1874).—Ramsay, Proc. Linn. Soc. N. S. Wales, iii. p. 264 (1878), iv. p. 97 (1879).—Salvad. Ibis, 1879, p. 322.

It is so difficult to describe in words the exact differences between the plumage of the various species of Goatsuckers, that we do not attempt to give a detailed description of the present species. Its nearest ally is probably *Podargus papuensis*, from which it is easily recognized by its diminutive size, as it is not half the bulk of the former bird.

It has been found in all the parts of New Guinea yet visited by naturalists, and it has also occurred in the islands of the Bay of Geelvink, having been procured in Jobi by Dr. Meyer, and by Dr. Beccari in Miosnom. Mr. Wallace met with the species in Waigiou and also in the Aru Islands, where Baron von Rosenberg and Dr. Beccari likewise obtained specimens. During his explorations in South-eastern New Guinea, Signor D'Albertis found the species near Naiabui and also on the Fly River. Mr. H. O. Forbes has recently obtained several specimens in the Sogeri district of the Astrolabe Range of mountains in the interior of South-eastern New Guinea.

A full account of the variation in plumage in the present species will be found in Count Salvadori's 'Uccelli di Papuasias;' and from the series sent by Mr. Forbes it is evident that there are two distinct phases of plumage, one thickly mottled with white, and the other more uniform rufous-brown. Apparently the latter are the female birds; and this assumption is confirmed by the specimens in the British Museum, where several individuals are emerging from the uniform rufous stage into that of the white-spotted dress of the adult male. On comparing examples from Northern Australia with others from New Guinea, we fail to find any differences to warrant their specific separation, and we have therefore unhesitatingly added *Podargus marmoratus* of Gould as a synonym of *P. ocellatus*.

Baron von Rosenberg states that the "Gongaboel," as it is called by the natives, is the least rare of the Goatsuckers found on the Aru Islands, where they were seen in some numbers at a little distance from Dobbo, in a small wood composed of low shrubs, above which towered some giant Casuarinas, and where some open bare spaces alternated with marshy spots covered with loose grass. According to the same author, the "Gongaboel" is a strictly nocturnal bird, which sleeps during the daytime in the hole of a tree or perched upon some large branch of the *Casuarina*, in which case they are always seated lengthwise and not across the bough. They feed on *Phalænæ*, *Phasmæ*, &c., which they capture on the wing.

Our illustration represents the adult male of this species of the natural size, and the figure is drawn from a specimen procured by Mr. H. O. Forbes in the Astrolabe Mountains. If Baron von Rosenberg's note as to the way in which the bird sits is correct, then the perching attitude in which our artist, Mr. Hart, has represented the species must be wrong; but he has only followed the traditions of the 'Birds of Australia,' and we suppose that the late Mr. Gould must have seen many *Podargi* at rest on a tree.

[R. B. S.]