

MELANOPYRRHUS ORIENTALIS.

Robertson's Starling.

- Gracula anais*, Schlegel, Nederl. Tijdschr. Dierk. iv. p. 18 (1871, nec Less.).
Gracula anais orientalis, Schlegel, Nederl. Tijdschr. Dierk. iv. p. 52 (1871).—Rosenb. Reis. naar Geelvinkbai, p. 140 (1875).
Gracula orientalis, Beccari, Ann. Mus. Civic. Genov. vii. p. 714 (1875).—Ramsay, Proc. Linn. Soc. New South Wales, iv. p. 99 (1879).
Gracula rosenbergii, Finsch in Brehm's 'Gefangene Vögel,' ii. p. 562 (1876).
Melanopyrrhus orientalis, Salvad. Ann. Mus. Civic. Genov. viii. p. 401 (1876), x. pp. 12, 20, note (1877).—D'Albert. & Salvad. op. cit. xiv. p. 90 (1879).—Salvad. op. cit. xvi. p. 195 (1880).—Id. Orn. Papuasie e delle Molucche, ii. p. 463 (1881).—Guillemard, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1885, p. 644.
Mina robertsonii, D'Albert. Ann. Mus. Civic. Genov. x. pp. 12, 20 (1877).—Id. Ibis, 1877, p. 368.
Gracula affinis, Rosenb. Malay. Arch. pp. 554, 590 (1879).
Eulabes orientalis, Ramsay, Proc. Linn. Soc. N. S. Wales, iii. p. 279 (1879).
Melanopyrrhus robertsonii, Sharpe, Journ. Linn. Soc. xiv. pp. 633, 687 (1879).

THIS species is closely allied to *M. anais*, but differs in having the whole of the head and neck golden yellow. Its habitat is also somewhat different from that of the foregoing species, as it is found chiefly in South-eastern New Guinea, being by no means uncommon in collections from Port Moresby, while Signor D'Albertis procured a large series on the Fly River. It likewise occurs in North-western New Guinea, having been met with at Bondey by Baron von Rosenberg, at Rubi by Dr. Meyer, and at Wandammen by Dr. Beccari.

The specimen figured in the accompanying Plate is, according to the researches of Count Salvadori, not perfectly adult, as it shows a patch of black feathers on the occiput. Sometimes also yellow plumes are seen on the throat, and the breadth of the yellow margins to the abdominal plumes also varies much in proportion to the presence or absence of black feathers on the occiput. Count Salvadori very truly remarks that the great variation in plumage exhibited by the series of thirty specimens examined by him seems to indicate that the species has not yet acquired absolute stability of character.

The following description is translated from Count Salvadori's work on the 'Birds of New Guinea':—

Head and entire hind neck, upper breast, rump, and upper tail-coverts golden yellow; eyebrows, cheeks, and throat black, the latter often more or less varied with yellow; back, wing-coverts, abdomen, and thighs black, with a green gloss on the edges of the feathers; wings and tail black; primary-quills with a white spot in the middle; iris yellow; bill and feet pale yellow.

The Plate represents a mature, but not quite adult, bird in two positions. The figures have been drawn from a specimen lent to us by Dr. Guillemard, and supposed to come from the Arfak Mountains.

[R. B. S.]