

them. I could not ascertain whether this bower was occupied by one pair or by several pairs of birds, or whether the sexes were in equal or unequal numbers—whether the male alone was the builder, or whether the wife assisted in the construction. I believe, however, that such a nest lasts for several seasons.

“The *Amblyornis* selects a flat even place around the trunk of a small tree that is as thick and as high as a walking-stick of middle size. It begins by constructing at the base of the tree a kind of cone, chiefly of moss, of the size of a man's hand. The trunk of the tree becomes the central pillar; and the whole building is supported by it. On the top of the central pillar twigs are then methodically placed in a radiating manner, resting on the ground, leaving an aperture for the entrance. Thus is obtained a conical and very regular hut. When the work is complete many other branches are placed transversely in various ways, to make the whole quite firm and impermeable. A circular gallery is left between the walls and the central cone. The whole is nearly 3 feet in diameter. All the stems used by the *Amblyornis* are the thin stems of an orchid (*Dendrobium*), an epiphyte forming large tufts on the mossy branches of great trees, easily bent like straw, and generally about 20 inches long. The stalks had the leaves, which are small and straight, still fresh and living on them—which leads me to conclude that this plant was selected by the bird to prevent rotting and mould in the building, since it keeps alive for a long time, as is so often the case with epiphytical orchids.

“The refined sense of the bird is not satisfied with building a hut. It is wonderful to find that the bird has the same ideas as a man; that is to say, what pleases the one gratifies the other. The passion for flowers and gardens is a sign of good taste and refinement. I discovered, however, that the inhabitants of Arfak did not follow the example of the *Amblyornis*. Their houses are quite inaccessible from dirt.

“*The Garden*.—Now let me describe the garden of the *Amblyornis*. Before the cottage there is a meadow of moss. This is brought to the spot and kept free from grass, stones, or any thing which would offend the eye. On this green turf flowers and fruits of pretty colour are placed so as to form an elegant little garden. The greater part of the decoration is collected round the entrance to the nest; and it would appear that the husband offers there his daily gifts to his wife. The objects are very various, but always of vivid colour. There were some fruits of a *Garcinia* like a small-sized apple. Others were the fruits of *Gardenias* of a deep yellow colour in the interior. I saw also small rosy fruits, probably of a *Scitamineous* plant, and beautiful rosy flowers of a splendid new *Vaccinium* (*Agapetes amblyornithis*). There were also fungi and mottled insects placed on the turf. As soon as the objects are faded they are moved to the back of the hut.

“The good taste of the *Amblyornis* is not only proved by the nice home it builds. It is a clever bird, called by the inhabitants ‘Buruk Gurea’ (master bird), since it imitates the songs and screamings of numerous birds so well that it brought my hunters to despair, who were but too often misled by the bird. Another name of the bird is ‘Tukan Robon,’ which means a gardener.”

The general colour of the present species is dark brown, rather more rufous on the head and upper back; the wings also rufous brown, the primaries darker brown; tail dark brown; entire under surface dark buff. The sexes, according to Professor Schlegel, are alike in plumage.

The figures in the Plate represent a pair of birds of the present species, the larger one being a little under life-size. They are drawn from specimens in my own collection. The representation of the garden and cabin is adapted from the woodcut given in the ‘Gardeners’ Chronicle,’ which is, in turn, derived from Dr. Beccari's original illustration.