

## PARADISEA SANGUINEA, *Shaw.*

### Red Bird of Paradise.

- Paradisea sanguinea*, Shaw, Gen. Zool. (1809), vol. vii. pt. 1, p. 487, pl. 59.  
*Paradisea rubra*, Vieill. Gal. Ois. (1825), vol. i. p. 152, pl. 99.—Wall. Proc. Zool. Soc. (1862), p. 160.—Id.  
Ibis (1859), p. 111 (1861), p. 287.—Malay Archip. vol. ii. pp. 214, 221, 243.  
*Red Bird of Paradise*, Lath. Gen. Hist. of Birds (1822), vol. iii. p. 186, sp. 4.  
*L'Oiseau de Paradis Rouge*, Levaill. Hist. Nat. des Ois. Parad. (1806), vol. i. pl. 6.  
*Le Paradis Rouge*, Vieill. Ois. dor. (1802), vol. ii. p. 14, pl. 3.  
*Paradisea sanguinea*, Elliot, Mon. Paradiseidæ, pl. 5.

As I am unable to add any thing concerning the history of *Paradisea sanguinea* to what has been said so well both by Mr. Wallace and also by Mr. Elliot, in his 'Monograph of the Paradiseidæ,' I take the liberty of copying the remarks of the latter, who says:—

"This beautiful bird, remarkable for the rich red plumes that spring from its sides and afford so conspicuous a decoration, is found upon the island of Waigiou and the neighbouring ones of Ghemien and Batanta. The list of synonyms given above will serve to show that for a long time it has been known to, and quoted by, many authors; yet we were practically ignorant of its nature and mode of life until Mr. Wallace visited one of the islands where it has its home, and published his account of it in the work to which I have so often had occasion to allude. I will let Mr. Wallace tell his story in his own words regarding the capture of this beautiful species.

"When I first arrived I was surprised at being told that there were no Paradise-birds at Muka, although there were plenty at Bessir, a place where the natives caught them and prepared the skins. I assured the people I had heard the cry of these birds close to the village; but they would not believe that I could know their cry. However, the very first time I went into the forest I not only heard but saw them, and was convinced there were plenty about; but they were very shy, and it was some time before we got any. My hunter first shot a female; and I one day got very close to a fine male. He was, as I expected, the rare red species, *Paradisea rubra*, which alone inhabits this island and is found nowhere else. He was quite low down, running along a bough searching for insects, almost like a Woodpecker; and the long black riband-like filaments in his tail hung down in the most graceful double curve imaginable. I covered him with my gun, and was going to use the barrel, which had a very small charge of powder and No. 8 shot, so as not to injure his plumage; but the gun missed fire, and he was off in an instant among the thickest jungle. Another day we saw no less than eight fine males at different times, and fired four times at them; but though other birds at the same distance almost always dropped, these all got away, and I began to think we were never to get this magnificent species. At length the fruit ripened on the fig-tree close to my house, and many birds came to feed on it; and one morning, as I was taking my coffee, a male Paradise-bird was seen to settle on its top. I seized my gun, ran under the tree, and, gazing up, could see it flying across from branch to branch, seizing a fruit here and another there; and then, before I could get a sufficient aim to shoot at such a height (for it was one of the loftiest trees of the tropics), it was away into the forest. They now visited the tree every morning; but they stayed so short a time, their motions were so rapid, and it was so difficult to see them, owing to the lower trees which impeded the view, that it was only after several days' watching, and one or two misses, that I brought down my bird—a male in the most magnificent plumage. . . . I had only shot two Paradiseas on my tree when they ceased visiting it, either owing to the fruit becoming scarce, or that they were wise enough to know there was danger. We continued to hear and see them in the forest, but after a month had not succeeded in shooting any more; and as my chief object in visiting Waigiou was to get these birds, I determined to go to Bessir, where there are a number of Papuans who catch and preserve them. I hired a small outrigger boat for this journey, and left one of my men to guard my house and goods. . . . My first business was to send for the men who were accustomed to catch the Birds of Paradise. Several came; and I showed them my hatchets, beads, knives, and handkerchiefs, and explained to them as well as I could by signs the price I would give for fresh-killed specimens. It is the universal custom to pay for every thing in advance; but only one man ventured to take goods to the value of two birds. The rest were suspicious, and wanted to see the result of the first bargain with the strange white man, the only one who had ever come to their island. After three days my man brought me the first bird—a very fine specimen, and alive, but tied up in a small