

## PARADISEA PAPUANA.

### Papuan Bird of Paradise.

*Paradisea papuana*, Bechst. Kurze Uebers. p. 131 (1811).—Gray, Gen. B. ii. p. 323 (1847).—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av. i. p. 413 (1850).—Gray, P. Z. S. 1859, p. 157.—Wallace, Ibis, 1859, p. 111; 1861, p. 287.—Schl. J. f. O. 1861, p. 385.—Sclater, P. Z. S. 1862, p. 123.—Wall. tom. cit. p. 160.—Rosenb. J. f. O. 1864, p. 129.—Schl. Nederl. Tijdschr. Dierk. iv. pp. 17, 49.  
*Paradisea bartletti*, Goodwin, P. Z. S. 1860, p. 244 (the young male).

THE specific name usually applied to this gorgeous bird is *minor*; I must therefore state my reasons for not adopting that title in the present instance. To call it *minor*, when it is the largest, is unphilosophical. I consider that there are two species or races confounded under one name; the examples brought home by Wallace from New Guinea, of which I have four or five, are by no means so fine or large as those from Mysol and other localities. I therefore propose to restrict the name *papuana* to the larger bird, and to adopt that of *minor* for the smaller. The term *papuana* is also applicable to the specimens sent from Jobi, as Count Salvadori states that the individuals from that island are larger, and the male birds have the plumes longer and much more finely developed, while the dull chestnut colour of the head in the females and young males is darker, occupying the whole of the head, and being abruptly separated from the yellow colour of the neck.

The present species has been on two occasions sent alive to this country, and has lived in the Zoological Gardens. The first specimens were brought by Mr. Wallace from Singapore in April 1862; and one of these lived till the 25th of December 1863, the other till the 28th of March 1864, in the Gardens. The second couple were obtained from the young French traveller, M. Léon Laglaize, who brought four living specimens with him on his return from his expedition to New Guinea. All these four specimens lived through the winter in the Jardin des Plantes at Paris; and two of them subsequently passed into the Zoological Society's collection in the Regent's Park, where one of them still survives.

Mr. Wallace gives the following account of his obtaining these specimens and their subsequent journey:—  
“When I returned home in 1862, I was so fortunate as to find two adult males of this species in Singapore; and as they seemed healthy and fed voraciously on rice, bananas, and cockroaches, I determined on giving the very high price asked for them (£100), and to bring them to England by the overland route under my own care. On my way home I stayed a week at Bombay, to break the journey and to lay in a fresh stock of bananas for my birds. I had great difficulty, however, in supplying them with insect food; for in the Peninsular and Oriental steamers cockroaches were scarce, and it was only by setting traps in the store-rooms, and by hunting an hour every night in the fore-castle, that I could secure a few dozen of these creatures, scarcely enough for a single meal. At Malta, where I stayed a fortnight, I got plenty of cockroaches from a bakehouse; and when I left I took with me several biscuit-tins full, as provision for the voyage home. We came through the Mediterranean in March with a very cold wind; and the only place on board the mail steamer where their large cage could be accommodated was exposed to a strong current of air down a hatchway, which stood open day and night; yet the birds never seemed to feel the cold. During the night-journey from Marseilles to Paris it was a sharp frost; yet they arrived in London in perfect health, and lived in the Zoological Gardens for one and two years respectively, often displaying their beautiful plumes to the admiration of the spectators. It is evident, therefore, that the Paradise-birds are very hardy, and require air and exercise rather than heat; and I feel sure that if a good-sized conservatory could be devoted to them, or if they could be turned loose in the tropical department of the Crystal Palace, or the Great Palm-house at Kew, they would live in this country for many years.”

The following account of these two birds when in the Gardens, was written by Mr. Bartlett for publication in my friend Mr. Elliot's 'Monograph of the Paradiseidæ':—“When the two birds of Paradise first arrived at the Gardens in April 1862, their plumes were quite short, only about five inches long. The birds had moulted; and the new feathers were growing in a thick bunch on each side below their wings. They appeared in good health, and were active and lively. I soon ascertained how fond they were of meal-worms and other insects; and they fed freely upon fruit, boiled rice, &c.;