

DIPHYLLODES SPECIOSA.

Magnificent Bird of Paradise.

- Oiseau de Paradis de la Nouvelle Guinée, dit Le Magnifique*, Montb. Pl. Enl. p. 194, pl. 631.—Sonn. Voy. Nouv. Guin. p. 163, pl. 98.—Levaill. H. N. Ois. de Paradis, i. pls. 9, 10.
- Magnificent Paradise-bird*, Lath. Gen. Syn. ii. p. 477, pl. 19.
- Paradisea speciosa*, Bodd. Tabl. Pl. Enl. p. 38.—Gray, Gen. B. p. 323.—Schl. Mus. P. B. *Coraces*, p. 86.—Id. N. T. D. iv. p. 171.—Gray, Hand-l. B. ii. p. 16.
- *magnifica*, Gm. S. N. i. p. 401.—Shaw, Gen. Zool. vii. p. 492, pl. 62.—Audeb. & Vieill. Ois. Dor. p. 15, pl. 4.—Wagler, Syst. Av., *Paradisea*, sp. 4.—Less. Traité, p. 338.—Wall. P. Z. S. 1862, p. 160.
- *cirrhatta*, Lath. Ind. Orn. i. p. 195.
- Diphyllodes seleucides*, Less. Ois. Parad. Syn. p. 16, pls. 19, 20.
- *magnifica*, Gray, List Gen. B. 1841, p. 53.—Bp. Consp. i. p. 413.—Wall. Ibis, 1861, p. 287.—Rosenb. J. f. O. 1864, p. 130.
- *speciosa*, Wallace, Malay Archipelago, ii. p. 247.—Elliot, Monogr. Parad. pl. 12.—Schl. P. Z. S. 1873, p. 697.—Wagner, J. f. O. 1873, p. 11, pl. 1, map 5.

Who was the original discoverer of this Bird of Paradise, seems to be a difficult question to decide; but it was probably first introduced to the scientific world by Sonnerat, who figures it in his 'Voyage à la Nouvelle Guinée.' Although Sonnerat doubtless procured specimens during his journey, and was thus the first to bring them to Europe, Montbeillard's work, in which a figure is also given, bears date two years before the volume of the first-mentioned author. There can be no doubt, however, that of these two early figures, one is a direct copy of the other; and from internal evidence in other parts of the 'Planches Enluminées,' I have every reason to believe that it was by no means an unfrequent practice for the authors of this standard work to make up plates from the figures and engravings of other works and then to colour them from the descriptions. Thus it is possible that Montbeillard's plate was made up from Sonnerat's already published figure, and that the date on the volume is the year in which the work was finished, and not of the actual part in which the plate of "Le Magnifique" appeared. Certain it is, however, that the species was very little known to the older authors; for after the works above mentioned, all the writers for years copied Montbeillard's plate into their books; and it is equally certain that, until the last ten years, none but skins of native preparation existed in the museums of the world. Recently, owing to the enterprise of the Dutch naturalists, a good series of perfect skins have reached Europe, and good examples are to be found in the British Museum and in my own collection. In Salwatti, according to Baron von Rosenberg, it cannot be very rare, judging from the number of skins collected; and it is found in the mountains both of this portion of New Guinea and of Mysol. In the former place it is called by the natives *Sabelo*; and in Mysol its name is *Arung-arung*. The late Dr. Bernstein procured numerous examples at Sorong, on the coast of New Guinea, facing Salwatti; and Von Rosenberg likewise records that it is an inhabitant of the eastern coast of the great island, where it is found both near the coast and in the interior. D'Albertis met with it in Atam; and during his last voyage Von Rosenberg discovered it to be an inhabitant of the island of Jobi.

Nothing is known of the habits of this beautiful bird, as it was not met with in a state of nature by Mr. Wallace. In his work on the Malay Archipelago is to be found the following note, from which it will be seen how recent has been the acquisition of properly prepared specimens by European naturalists:—

"From what we know of the habits of allied species, we may be sure that the greatly developed plumage of this bird is erected and displayed in some remarkable manner. The mass of feathers on the under surface are probably expanded into a hemisphere, while the beautiful yellow is no doubt elevated so as to give the bird a very different appearance from that which it presents in the dried and flattened skins of the natives, through which alone it is at present known. The feet appear to be dark blue."

The Plate represents two males of the size of life. The female is a little less than life-size.