

DREPANORNIS ALBERTISI, *Sclater*.

D'Albertis's Bird of Paradise.

Drepanornis albertisi, Sclater, P. Z. S. 1873, p. 558, pl. 47.—D'Albertis, *t. c.* p. 558.—Elliot, Monogr. Paradiseidæ, pl. 21.

Epimachus wilhelminæ, Meyer, J. f. O. 1873, p. 404.—Id. Ibis, 1874, p. 303.

THIS remarkable new form of Paradise-bird was one of the most interesting discoveries made by Signor d'Albertis during his recent explorations in the island of New Guinea. He found it at Mount Arfak; and almost simultaneously, Dr. Meyer discovered it in the same locality. We are also informed by Dr. Sclater that previous to this, Baron von Rosenberg had seen a female in the collection of Mr. Van Duivenbode, at Ternate, as long ago as April 1871 (*cf.* Ibis, 1874, p. 187).

The following are the notes given by Signor d'Albertis with regard to its habits :—

“This will probably prove to be a new bird, both generically and specifically. It is a very rare bird, and many of the natives did not know it; but others called it ‘Quarna.’ The peculiarity of this species consists in the formation of the bill, head, and softness of the plumage. At first it does not appear to have the beauty peculiar to other birds of this class; but when observed more closely, in a strong light, the plumage is seen to be rich and brilliant: the feathers rising from the base of the beak are of a metallic green, and reddish copper-colour; the feathers of the breast, when smooth, are of a violet grey, and when raised form a semicircle round the body, reflecting a rich golden colour; other violet-grey feathers arise from the flanks, which are edged by a rich metallic violet tint; and when the plumage is entirely expanded the bird appears as if it had formed two semicircles round itself, and is very handsome.

“The tail- and wing-feathers are yellowish; underneath they are of a darker shade. The head is barely covered with small round feathers, which are rather deficient at the back of the ear. The shoulders are tobacco-colour; and under the throat black, blending into olive. The breast is violet-grey, banded by a line of olive, the rest white. The beak is black, eyes chestnut, and the feet of a dark leaden colour.

“This species is met with in the vicinity of Mount Arfak. Its food is not known, nothing having been found in the stomachs of those prepared except clean water.”

The following complete descriptions are taken from Mr. Elliot's ‘Monograph of the Paradiseidæ:’—

“*Male*.—Head covered with short, rather stiff, light-brown feathers, tipped with deep purple. Two spots of metallic-blue feathers between the eyes and bill, projecting above the eyes like horns; a spot of bare skin behind the eyes apparently red. Neck and back rufous brown. Primaries blackish brown, edged with light-rufous feathers on the outer webs. Secondaries light rufous brown on outer web, black on the inner, edged with very light reddish brown. The three innermost secondaries light reddish brown on both webs. Upper tail-coverts and tail bright reddish brown. Chin and throat metallic deep purple, black in certain lights. Breast covered with long feathers, grey, with rich purple reflections, and edged on the lower part with dull green, crossing the body in a narrow bar. From either side, near the shoulder of the wing, spring two tufts of feathers that extend beyond the breast-shield, of an intense metallic fiery red, tipped with purple. These when not elevated are altogether hidden by the outer feathers, which are uniform purple like the breast. From the flanks, just above the termination of the breast-shields, on either side project two long tufts of plumes, which extend to the end of the under tail-coverts, of the same colour as the breast, brownish grey, each feather tipped with very brilliant deep purple. The abdomen and under tail-coverts pure white, the former streaked with purplish grey on the upper portion. Bill very long, slender, and much curved, black. Feet and tarsi dull lead-colour.

“*Female*.—Head chestnut brown. Back and wings rufous brown. Primaries and secondaries blackish brown on inner web, outer web brown. Upper tail-coverts and tail light red. Chin and throat blackish brown, each feather with a central streak of light brown. Breast light brown, irregularly barred with dark brown. Flanks and lower parts of body yellowish brown, indistinctly barred with dark brown, except in the centre of the abdomen, which is light reddish white. Thighs reddish, barred with brown. Under tail-coverts pale reddish. Iris chestnut. Bill long, curved, and slender like that of the male, black. Feet and tarsi lead-colour.”

For the opportunity of figuring the typical specimens of this bird, I am indebted to the courtesy of Signor d'Albertis. The birds are represented about the natural size.