

NINOX ODIOSA, *Slater*.

New-Britain Hawk-Owl.

Ninox taniata (?), Ramsay, Proc. Linn. Soc. N. S. W. i. p. 369 (1876).

Ninox odiosa, Slater, P. Z. S. 1877, p. 108.—Salvad. Ann. Mus. Civic. Genov. xii. p. 41 (1878).—Ramsay, Proc. Linn. Soc. N. S. W. iii. p. 249 (1879).—Salvad. Orn. Papuasie, etc. i. p. 86 (1880).—Id. Atti R. Accad. Torin. xvi. p. 620 (1881).—Gurney, Ibis, 1882, p. 131.—Salvad. Orn. Papuasie, etc. iii. p. 511 (1882).

THE original specimen of this Owl was sent from New Britain by the Rev. George Brown, and since the arrival of the first example, several more have been procured by Lieut. Richards, Mr. Kleinschmidt, Dr. Finsch, and others; but it appears to have been found only in New Britain, and not in any of the adjacent groups of islands.

As suggested by Dr. Slater in his description of the species, there can be no doubt that in many respects the present bird is allied to *N. punctulata* of Celebes; but there are so many points of difference that they cannot be confounded together. In the Celebean bird the back is spotted, as well as the head, and there are none of the white marks on the scapulars and wing-coverts which are conspicuous in *N. odiosa*. Underneath, the finely striated breast and abdomen distinguish the latter species from the thickly mottled and barred under surface of *N. punctulata*.

The following is the description of the adult male:—

General colour above pale chocolate-brown, nearly uniform; the scapulars with concealed bars of white and longitudinal ovate markings of the same on the outer web; the rump and upper tail-coverts with a few minute spots or bars of pale ruddy brown; wing-coverts nearly uniform, with a few spots and small bars of white, larger and more conspicuous on the greater series, which have the same ovate markings as the scapulars; bastard wing pale chocolate-brown, the primary-coverts rather more dusky brown, both series being perfectly uniform; quills dusky brown, externally pale chocolate, with a few spots of white on the edge of the outer and inner webs; head and nape dull umber-brown, profusely spotted with rather narrow bars of brownish white; nasal plumes brown with blackish centres; above the eye a broad streak of white; feathers below the eye also whitish; the ear-coverts chocolate-brown, barred with blackish and having whitish shaft-lines; throat white, the feathers on the sides of the throat having blackish tips and forming a disk; remainder of under surface white, the feathers centred with narrow brown streaks, somewhat widening towards the ends; sides of breast chocolate-brown, mottled with spots and bars of white; thighs dull white, slightly streaked on the upper parts with chocolate; under wing-coverts white with chocolate-brown tips; axillaries and under wing-coverts white, mottled with chocolate-brown on the edge of the wing, the lower series dusky brown barred internally with yellowish white, thus resembling the lower surface of the quills; "bill ash-colour; feet drab; iris yellow" (*Richards*). Total length 10 inches, culmen 0·8, wing 6·4, tail 4·2, tarsus 1·3.

The specimen is one which Mr. Ramsay lent to us; it is a male procured by Captain Richards in New Britain on the 30th of July, 1879, and is represented in the Plate of the full size. The description is taken from the same specimen.

[R. B. S.]