

## IRIDIPITTA BAUDII.

### Red-backed Pitta.

*Pitta baudii*, Müll. & Schleg. Verh. natuurl. Gesch., fol., Zool. *Pitta*, pp. 10-20, pl. 2 (1839-44).—Gray, Gen. B. i. p. 243 (1846).—Low, Sarawak, p. 410 (1848).—Schl. Handl. Dierk. i. p. 253 (1857).—Id. Vog. Nederl. Ind., *Pitta*, pl. 5, figs. 1 & 2 (1863).—Id. Mus. Pays-Bas, *Pitta*, p. 5. (1863).—Wall. Ibis, 1864, p. 107.—Gray, Hand-list of Birds, i. p. 296, no. 4374.—Salvad. Ucc. Born. p. 243, no. 254.—Gould, Birds of Asia, part xxix. (1877).  
*Brachyurus baudii*, Bp. Consp. i. p. 255 (1850).—Elliot, Monogr. Pittidæ, pl. xxii. (1863).—Id. Ibis, 1870, p. 419.  
*Iridipitta baudii*, Bp. Consp. Volucr. Anisod. p. 7 (1854).

THIS is a very rare bird in collections, and, as far as we know at present, is confined to the northern part of the island of Borneo. Thus the female example figured in the Plate was the first adult bird of that sex ever procured, having been obtained by Mr. Hugh Low on the Mengalong river in North-western Borneo; and more recently I have seen quite a series obtained by Mr. W. B. Pryer in Sandakan on the north-east coast of the same island; but its scarcity in Museums proves beyond a doubt that it is a rare bird.

Good figures of the species are given in Professor Schlegel's illustrations to the species of *Pitta* found in the Dutch East Indies; but the picture in Mr. Elliot's 'Monograph of the Pittidæ' is not quite so satisfactory, as the bird is there represented with a conspicuous white band across the lower rump, and the white band on the wing is also different from that of any specimen examined by me. As the bird from which this illustration was drawn is stated to be in the Museum of the Philadelphia Academy, I hope that some naturalist will re-examine it on some future occasion.

I add a full description of both sexes of this *Pitta* :—

*Adult male.* Crown of head and nape brilliant cobalt blue; lores, feathers round the eye, sides of head, ear-coverts, and sides of neck black, bordering the blue crown for its entire extent, the lower feathers at the sides of the neck purple, tipped with red where they adjoin the mantle; back and scapulars red, somewhat washed with sandy brown on the scapulars, rump, and upper tail-coverts; the lower tail-coverts bright cobalt, with a mesial streak of black; tail deep blue, black below; wing-coverts black, the median series tipped with white, forming a diagonal bar across the wing; quills blackish brown, the innermost secondaries externally sandy brown, the outermost of the latter tipped with white, forming a second bar across the wing; cheeks, throat, and sides of neck white; fore neck and breast black, the rest of the under surface purplish blue, shaded with richer purple on the sides of the body; thighs ashy white; under wing-coverts black, the axillaries tipped with white; lower surface of quills blackish brown; bill black; feet pale yellowish.

Total length 6·5 inches, culmen 0·85, wings 3·4, tail 1·75, tarsus 1·4.

*Adult female.* Above red, the head dull ochraceous brown; sides of face and under surface of body ochraceous brown, paler and inclining to buff on the abdomen; the sides of the neck washed with the same red as the back; under tail-coverts blue, slightly washed with ochre on the margins; wing-coverts as in the male, but browner and having the white bar across the wing slightly tinged with ochre; quills blackish, the inner secondaries dull sandy brown, the outer secondaries ochraceous towards the tips; upper tail-coverts bright cobalt; tail deep blue.

Total length 6 inches, culmen 0·9, wing 3·55, tail 1·6, tarsus 1·5.

The figures in the Plate represent two adult males and a female, of the natural size. One of them, a fine male, is in my own possession, and was received in exchange direct from M. Temminck. The female, collected by Mr. Hugh Low, is now in the collection of the British Museum.

[R. B. S.]