

MELANOPITTA MAFOORANA.

Mafoor-Island Pitta.

Pitta novæ-guinæ, pt., Schlegel, Nederl. Tijdschr. Dierk. iv. p. 16 (1871).—Rosenb. Reist. naar Geelvinksb. p. 36 (1875).

Pitta novæ-guinæ mafoorana, Schlegel, Mus. Pays-Bas, Revue *Pitta*, p. 8 (1874).—Meyer, in Dawson Rowley's Orn. Misc. p. 268 (1877).

Pitta mafoerana, Beccari, Ann. Mus. Civic. Genov. vii. p. 709 (1875).—Id. Ibis, 1876, p. 248.

Pitta maforensis, Gould, Birds of New Guinea, part vii. (1878).

Pitta mayforeana, Legge, Birds of Ceylon, p. 689 (1879).

Pitta mafoorana, Salvad. Ann. Mus. Civic. Genov. xvi. p. 184 (1880).—Id. Orn. della Papuasie &c. p. 386 (1881).

THIS species was separated by Professor Schlegel in 1874, in his Review of the Pittas in the Leiden Museum, under the trinomial title above quoted; and he apparently regards it as nothing but a race of *M. novæ-guinæ*. In this conclusion I am unable to agree, as it seems to me to be a thoroughly well-marked species. It is nearly allied to the last-mentioned bird and to *Melanopitta rosenbergi*, but is distinct from both. It is of about the same size, and has the colour of the chest, breast, and nape of a fine glistening greenish white, as it exists in *M. novæ-guinæ*, but more extended, the green of the chest blending into green and blue on the flanks; and it differs also in having the long upper tail-coverts black, slightly edged with blue.

Dr. Meyer did not get a *Pitta* on the island of Mafoor; but the Leiden Museum possesses four specimens, killed there in January and February 1869 by Rosenberg, who says that it is called "Popek" by the natives. Dr. Beccari also managed to procure some examples.

In describing the species, Professor Schlegel says that the Mafoor bird is similar to *M. novæ-guinæ*, but has the tail-feathers more or less tipped with dirty green, the large upper tail-coverts black, with a fine blue edging, the smaller upper tail-coverts of a fine metallic whitish green, and the blue of the abdomen darker, the quills being without white spots. This constitutes, as far as I know, all that has been published respecting the present bird. The Plate represents a pair of these birds, of the natural size. They form part of the rich collections made by Dr. Beccari in New Guinea and the islands of Geelvink Bay. They were kindly lent to me by Count Salvadori during his visit to this country; and to him I have once more to express my high appreciation of his kindness.

Total length $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches, wing $5\frac{1}{4}$, tail $1\frac{3}{8}$, tarsus $1\frac{3}{4}$.

In illustrating this species in my work on the Birds of New Guinea, I unwittingly gave the name of the species as *Pitta maforensis*; and I am glad to be able to restore to it on the present occasion the original title bestowed upon it by Professor Schlegel.

[R. B. S.]