

Notes on some Birds from Savage Island, Tutuila, &c., in the collection of the REV. MR. WHITMEE, F.R.G.S., &c., &c.

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Through the kindness of the Rev. S. J. Whitmee, I have been enabled to examine a small collection of birds, which that gentleman has brought with him from the South Sea Islands. This collection contains some very interesting species from Savage Island, and is valuable in determining the range of habitat of some of the South Sea Island birds. I find among those obtained at the Island of "Tokalow" of the Union Group, a very beautiful species of Tern, rarely found in Australian collections, perhaps from its seldom visiting the coast, and belonging more to the sea-loving section of the group (*Anous*) than to those (*Sterna*) which usually frequent the shores.

This species is seldom seen near land except during the breeding season when it congregates in great numbers; I find it to be identical with *Procelsterna* (*Lafr*) *albivittata*, (*Bp.*) the *Anous cinereus* of Gould, but it differs from Mr. Gould's description* a little in the size, as will be seen from the following measurements.

ANOUS CINEREUS, *Gould*.

Mr. Whitmee's specimens from Tokalow.

Total length from base of bill to oil gland 6.1 inches; from tip of bill to extreme tip of outer tail feathers, 10.5 inches; bill from forehead 1.1 inches, from angle of mouth 1.4 inches. Wing from flexure 7.25 inches; tarsus 0.9 inch; tail from oil gland to centre feathers 3.2 inches; from ditto to outer feathers 4.5 inches; middle toe and nail, 1.2 inches.

Measurements from Mr. Gould's Handbook ii. p. 421.

Total length, 11 inches; bill, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches; wing, 8 inches; tail, 5 inches; tarsi, $1\frac{1}{8}$ inches; middle toe and nail, $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches.

I may also note from near Samoa a specimen of *Puffinus* (*Nectris*), *carneipes*? This species differs from its near ally *Puffinus brevicaudis* (*Brandt*) in having a longer tail, wings,

* Gould, Bds., Austr., fol. Vol. VII, pl. 37, id. Handbook, Vol. II, p. 421.

and tarsus, and in having the legs and feet flesh colored. Mr. Gould mentions it from the Southern and Western coasts, and states that it resorts, among other places, to the small islands off Cape Leuwin for the purpose of breeding. Total length of skin, 14·8 inches; bill from forehead, 1·7 inches; from nostril to tips, 0·9 inches; from gape, 1·9 inches; wing, 1·1 inches; tarsus, 2 inches; tail, 3·8 inches; middle toe and nail, 2·4 inches.

The bill in this specimen has the nostrils and culmen blackish.

Among the Pigeons I find *Didunculus strigirostris*, on which some very interesting notes by Mr. Whitmee will be found in the P.Z.S., 1874, p. 183.

? *Carpophaga microcera*, Bp. *Janthænas vitiensis*, Quoy et Gaim.

Phlegænas stairii, *Ptilonopus mariæ*. Homb. et Jacq. *Ptilonopus fasciatus*, Peale. From the Samoan Islands.

And a *Ptilonopus* sp. from Savage Island.

This is apparently one of the varieties of *P. porphyraceus*. (Forst.) The crown of the head has more of a rose pink tint than of a violet purple and is margined behind with a line of yellow; occiput and hind neck tinged with green, remainder of the neck above and the mantle, ashy-grey tinged with green; throat and chin white, under surface and sides of the neck and face, the chest breast, and the under surface of the wings and tail ashy grey; across the lower part of the breast a short dark obscure band, of a violet tint in certain lights; the abdomen, from this band downwards, the flanks and feathered portions of the legs green, the feathers on central portions of the abdomen and lower part of thighs margined with yellow; under tail-coverts clear bright yellow without any orange or other tint.

Tail, dark ashy grey below, green above; across the tips of the feathers, on the under surface is a band of ashy white; on the outer feathers this band is shaded with green on the margins, and finally narrowly edged with yellow. Wings above, bright green, like the tail, the quills brownish black on the inner webs, the secondaries and wing coverts narrowly edged with yellow; the back

scapulars green, mesially shaded with bluish green, forming speculæ; rump, and upper tail coverts of a duller tinge of green.

Total length, $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches; bill, 0·6 inch; wing, 5·3 inches; tail, 3 inches; tarsus, 0·9 inch; bare portion, about 0·2 inch. Bill and feet greenish grey.

This variety—as both the birds I have examined show the same characteristics—may eventually prove to belong to a distinct species, and if such be the case, I propose for it the name of *P. whitmeei*, in honor of its discoverer.

COLLOCALIA SPODIOPYGIA, from Samoan Islands.

These specimens do not differ from the Fiji individuals, except perhaps in being a trifle smaller, they nest in caves, glueing together fibrous roots, grass, or the leaves of the *Casuarinæ*, and fastening their nests to the roofs, sides, or ledges of the rocks. The eggs are white, and about the size and shape of the red eye-browed finch, *Estrilda temporalis*.

Among the Meliphagidæ there is nothing of note, except perhaps some fine males of *Myzomela nigriventris*, and two of the large *Leptornis samoensis*. There is a *Campephaga* agreeing well with the *Lanius Karu* of Lesson, not having any rufous tinge on any part. Also an *Aplonis* both from Savage Island.

A fine Kingfisher (? *Halcyon sacra*), from Tutuilla, which makes me doubt that the birds from Fiji belong to this same species. The bird is apparently quite adult, the head, the whole of the neck, throat, and all the under surface white, ear-coverts and a narrow collar round the back of the neck blue separated from the back by a broad band of white; feathers on the crown of the head tipped with blue and margined or tipped here and there with light rufous or yellowish, several of the feathers on the broad white band over the eye, and a few on the back of the neck, also tinged irregularly with yellowish; the upper surface of the wings and tail dark blue, the scapulars and back blue tinged with green; under wing and tail-coverts white, inner webs

of wing and tail quills blackish, first feather of the primaries all black, except at the base, which, as in the remainder of the quills, is whitish on the inner web. Bill, from forehead, 1·8 inches ; from nostril, 1·4 inches ; from gape, 1·9 inches ; width of gape, 0·17 inch. Total length, 9 inches ; Wing, 3·75 inches ; tail, 2·7 inches ; tarsus, 0·55 inch. Measurements taken from a spirit specimen in the flesh.

Bill black, base of lower mandibles to near the tip, extending along the lower ridge, white.

Ortygometra quadristrigata and *Porzana tabuensis*, from the Samoan Islands. There are also specimens of *Ardea sacra* and *Phaëton æthereus*, of which latter I give the following measurements :—

Bill yellow, 1·9 inches ; from angle of the mouth, 2·3 inches ; wing, 10·3 inches ; tarsus, 0·75 inch ; tail, 4·5 inches ; centre feathers, 20·2 inches.

EXHIBITS.

Mr. Brazier exhibited specimens of *Haliotis Caniliculata*, a species not previously found in Port Jackson ; also of *Tellina perna*, from the same locality, and a collection of small shells, showing a convenient way of displaying them.

Mr. Masters exhibited a large number of Spiders, beautifully mounted on glass slides, enclosed in glass tubes filled with clear spirits of wine. The specimens were affixed to the slides by ordinary clear gum, which rapidly hardens in spirits. The advantage claimed for this process of mounting is not only the improved appearance of the specimens, but the facility with which the most minute anatomical details may be examined under the microscope, without the necessity of removing the specimens from the slide or tube.



Ramsay, Edward Pearson. 1878. "Notes on some birds from Savage Island, Tutuila, &c., in the collection of the Rev. Mr. Whitmee, F.R.G.S., &c., &c." *Proceedings of the Linnean Society of New South Wales* 2, 139–142.

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