

## New Birds for Australia.

By A. J. CAMPBELL, COL. MEM. B.O.U., MELBOURNE.

(Published in "Bulletin No. 3" of the R.A.O.U., 21/5/12.)

MR. H. L. White, of Belltrees, New South Wales, has been good enough to send for examination and exhibition a small parcel of northern skins, among which three may be separated as new, namely:—

### (1) *Ptilonorhynchus minor* (Lesser Satin Bower-Bird).

The discovery of a second but smaller species of the familiar Satin Bower-Bird is of considerable interest to ornithologists.

The new bird is from that rich region the Herberton Range (the peculiar home of such novelties as *Scenopæetes* and *Prionodura*), and is about half the bulk of its more southern representative, *P. violaceus*. Two mature males secured possess the same lustrous, deep blue-black plumage as that of the larger Satin Bower-Bird.

The following are the comparative dimensions in inches of the two birds:—

*P. violaceus*—Length, 13; wing, 6.5; tail, 5; tarsus, 2; culmen, 0.9.

*P. minor*— „ 10.5; „ 5.75; „ 4; „ 1.75; „ 0.8.

Mr. White describes the eggs of *P. minor* in the pages of this *Bulletin*, while the description of the female and further information concerning this species will be awaited with interest.

### (2) *Ptilotis carpentariensis* (Gulf Honey-eater).

Dr. E. P. Ramsay, in his "Tabular List of Australian Birds" (1888), indicates *P. cratitia* for Port Darwin and Gulf of Carpentaria districts. Mr. A. J. North, in a more recent work ("Special Catalogue No. 1" of the Australian Museum), does not mention either of those districts for *P. cratitia*.

However, in the collection above mentioned is a *Ptilotis* from Burketown resembling *cratitia*, but its general colouration is more yellow, especially the margins of the primaries and tail feathers, about the gape, &c., while the dark mark across the face is brownish instead of dull black.

There is no collector's note on the label of the specimen to indicate what was the colour of the naked flesh at the gape in the living bird, which in *P. cratitia* is lilac.

As the bird was collected near the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria, the name *Ptilotis carpentariensis* is suggested for it.

### (3) *Ptilotis sub-chrysops* (Lesser Yellow-faced Honey-eater).

Attention has been more than once drawn to the smaller variety of *P. chrysops* frequenting the coastal scrubs of Northern Queensland, notably the Cooktown district.

Although northern and southern birds are similar, except for size, it is feasible to suppose that *P. chrysops*, frequenting, say, the



rocky Grampian Range in Victoria, is not identical with the bird inhabiting the luxuriant scrubs of the Bellenden-Ker Range in tropical Queensland. No doubt ornithological students will agree to separate the northern bird under the suggestive name of *subchrysops*, with a wing-measurement of 2.9 inches, as against 3.2 inches for that of a typical *chrysops*.

### **Piezorhynchus alecto** (Temminck).

Mr. White's enterprise has won yet another bird, which, although known, is new for the continent.

Although not altogether a surprise, it is interesting to discover the New Guinea Shining Flycatcher at Cape York, where Mr. White's specimens (♂ and ♀) were obtained.

As the late Dr. Bowdler Sharpe, in the "Catalogue of Birds," British Museum (vol. iv., p. 415), states:—"The Australian bird (*P. nitidus*) differs from *P. alecto* in possessing a much longer and thinner bill, while the females are thus contrasted—*alecto*, mantle light chestnut, like the back; *nitidus*, mantle dark ashy, shaded with the purple colour of the head, and separating the latter from the back, which is dark chestnut."

Mr. Gregory Mathews, in *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club*, No. clxxi., described last year a Shining Flycatcher from the Cooktown district under the name *P. nitidus wardelli*, and remarks the adult male differs from the typical *P. nitidus* in "having a shorter and wider bill, the general colour deeper, and the measurements slightly larger."

While camped at Cardwell, August, 1885, I obtained a pair of Shining Flycatchers (now in the National Museum, Melbourne), which agrees with Mr. Mathews' Cooktown specimens so far as the description of bill is concerned.

## Description of Eggs of Lesser Satin Bower-Bird (*Ptilonorhynchus minor*, Campbell).

BY H. L. WHITE, R.A.O.U., BELLTREES, N.S.W.

(Published in "Bulletin No. 3" of the R.A.O.U., 21/5/12.)

*Types*.—Eggs oval in shape; surface of shell slightly glossy, and under the lens minute pittings like pin-pricks appear all over the shell, thus rendering it slightly granular. Ground colour light cream, beautifully blotched and spotted all over, particularly at the larger ends, with reddish-brown, umber, purplish-grey and slaty markings; the last two colours appear as if beneath the surface of the shell, and predominate in both eggs. The pair measure in inches:—(a) 1.70 x 1.10, (b) 1.68 x 1.11.

Taken by Mr. Geo. Sharp, at Evelyn scrubs, Cairns district, North Queensland, 26th November, 1908.

*Co-Types*.—Eggs slightly more swollen than those of the type



Campbell, Archibald James. 1912. "New Birds for Australia." *The Emu : official organ of the Australasian Ornithologists' Union* 12(1), 19–20.

<https://doi.org/10.1071/mu912019>.

**View This Item Online:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/81122>

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1071/mu912019>

**Permalink:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/379919>

**Holding Institution**

Smithsonian Libraries and Archives

**Sponsored by**

Smithsonian

**Copyright & Reuse**

Copyright Status: Public domain. The BHL considers that this work is no longer under copyright protection.

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.