

DESCRIPTION OF NESTS AND EGGS OF SOME NEW BIRDS,
COLLECTED ON THE ISLAND OF ALDABRA, NORTH-
WEST OF MADAGASCAR, BY DR. W. L. ABBOTT.

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AMONG the interesting and varied collections of natural-history specimens lately received from Dr. W. L. Abbott, were a few nests and eggs, and the following are believed to be still undescribed and new to science:

IXOCINCLA MADAGASCARIENSIS ROSTRATA, Ridgway.

Two nests and eggs of this new subspecies were taken on December 22 and 31, 1892, respectively. The nests are rather slight structures and are composed externally of fine rootlets, small twigs, dry leaves, and plant fibers, and lined with finer materials of the same kinds and dry grasses. Both nests were placed in crotches of thorny shrubs in the jungle and about 8 feet from the ground. One of them, the type-specimen, No. 26200, U. S. National Museum collection, measures $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches in depth by 4 inches in outer diameter. The inner diameter is 3 inches by $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches deep.

The eggs, No. 26199, U. S. National Museum collection, set $\frac{1}{2}$, measure .99 by .70 and .95 by .71 inch, and No. 26200, a single egg measures .99 by .68 inch. They are ovate in shape, the shell is close-grained and rather glossy. The ground color is vinaceous pink and is profusely spotted and blotched with different shades of claret brown, vinaceous rufus and lavender, and the markings are heaviest about the larger ends of the eggs where they form a wreath.

BUCHANGA ALDABRANA, Ridgway.

The collection made by Dr. Abbott contains 3 sets of eggs and 2 nests of this species. The nests are very neatly and firmly constructed of small fine twigs well interlaced with each other and are lined with finer materials of the same kind. They are rather shallow for their size and are usually placed on a horizontal branch of a casuarina tree at no very great height, varying from 5 to 10 feet from the ground.

The type specimen No. 26191, U. S. National Museum collection, taken November 18, 1892, measures externally $5\frac{1}{2}$ in diameter by $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in depth. Inner diameter 3 inches by $1\frac{1}{4}$ in depth.

The shell of these eggs is closely granulated, feels smooth to the touch, and is without luster. The ground color is a rich cream with a pinkish tint, and this is sparingly marked with a few scattered spots of cinnamon rufous and brick-red, and one or two specimens show also a few lavender dots. The markings, few as they are, are generally heaviest about the larger end of the egg. The measurements of the eggs are as follows:

No. 26189, U. S. National Museum collection, set $\frac{1}{3}$, taken December 4, 1892, is 1.05 by .76, 1.04 by .75, and 1.03 by .75 inches.

No. 26190, set $\frac{2}{3}$, taken November 18, 1892, is 1.04 by .74, 1.03 by .74, and 1.02 by .74 inches.

No. 26191, set, $\frac{3}{2}$ taken on the same date, is 1.05 by .78 and 1.03 by .78. In shape they vary from ovate to short ovate.

FOUDIA ALDABRANA, Ridgway.

This new species is represented by two nests and four sets of eggs. The nests, considering the size of this bird, are large and well constructed; open on the side and partially domed. They are externally composed of small twigs, some with leaves still attached, weed stems and coarse grasses, and lined with finer grasses. The entrance is on the side. The outer diameter of the type specimen, No. 26193, U. S. National Museum collection, taken December 10, 1892, is 9 by 7 inches, inner diameter, 3 by $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches. This nest was placed in a mangrove. The eggs of this new species are pale glaucous green in color, unspotted and elongate ovate in shape. The shell is rather thin and glossy.

No. 26192, U. S. National Museum collection, set $\frac{1}{3}$, taken November 27, 1892, measures .83 by .58, .82 by .59 and .79 by .58 inches.

No. 26193, set $\frac{2}{2}$, taken December 10, 1892, measures .79 by .58 and .75 by .59 inches.

No. 26194, set $\frac{3}{3}$, taken November 13, 1892, measures .80 by .56, .81 by .56 and .81 by .57 inches.

No. 26195, set $\frac{4}{2}$, taken December 10, 1892, measures .81 by .55 and .81 by .55.

ROUGETIUS ALDABRANUS, Gunther.

This rail is represented by 2 nests and several probably incomplete sets of eggs. Nest No. 26180, U. S. National Museum collection, the type taken on December 17, 1892, is very loosely constructed of small twigs and plant stems, and was placed in a dense clump of long grass and scrub 18 inches from the ground. The nest measured 10 inches in outer diameter by 7 inches in depth, and the cavity $4\frac{1}{2}$ by $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches in depth, so that only the head of the female protruded from the nest as she sat upon the eggs.

Nest No. 26179, U. S. National Museum collection, taken December 20, 1892, is composed of finer materials, principally dry grasses. It was placed on the ground in a cavity of coral rock, which, according to Dr. Abbott, appears to be the favorite nesting site for this species, the remaining sets of eggs having all been taken in such situations, these cavities being usually nearly filled with small twigs and dry grasses, and the nests were usually concealed by long, tangled bunches of growing grass.

The shell of these eggs is strong, finely granulated, and moderately glossy, and in shape they vary from ovate to elongate ovate. The ground color is creamy white, sparingly dotted with fine spots of liver-brown, vinaceous and lavender, which are usually heaviest about the larger end of the egg.

The measurements of these eggs are as follows:

No. 26178, U. S. National Museum collection, set $\frac{1}{4}$, taken December 22, 1892, 1.60 by 1.19, 1.69 by 1.22, 1.73 by 1.20, 1.69 by 1.23 inches.

No. 26179, set $\frac{2}{2}$, taken December 20, 1892, 1.67 by 1.15 and 1.70 by 1.11 inches.

No. 26180, set $\frac{3}{2}$, taken December 17, 1892, 1.68 by 1.19 and 1.69 by 1.15 inches.

No. 26181, set $\frac{4}{2}$, taken December 13, 1892, is 1.75 by 1.17 and 1.87 by 1.15 inches.

No. 26182, set $\frac{5}{3}$, taken December 18, 1892, is 1.67 by 1.17, 1.65 by 1.05. and 1.68 by 1.16 inches.



Bendire, Charles. 1894. "Description of nests and eggs of some new birds, collected on the Island of Aldabra, northwest of Madagascar, by Dr. W. L. Abbott." *Proceedings of the United States National Museum* 17(983), 39–41.
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