

XXXIV.—On two new Birds from Eastern Australia.

By JOHN GOULD, F.R.S.

To the Editors of the Annals and Magazine of Natural History.

26 Charlotte Street, Bedford Square, W.C.

Sept. 13, 1867.

GENTLEMEN,

Will you do me the favour to insert in your next Number the following descriptions of two birds from Eastern Australia, which I believe to be new to science, and oblige

Yours very faithfully,

JOHN GOULD.

*Cuculus (Cacomantis) castaneiventris.*

Chin, ear-coverts, crown, and upper surface deep purplish grey; all the under surface, including the under tail-coverts, bright chestnut-red; wings brown, glossed with olive; upper tail-coverts and tail deep greyish purple; all the feathers tipped and the lateral ones toothed on their inner web with white, which assumes on the two outer ones the appearance of interrupted bars; bill purplish black; legs and feet orange; nails black.

Total length  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches; bill  $\frac{7}{8}$ , wing  $4\frac{1}{4}$ , tail 5, tarsi  $\frac{3}{4}$ .

*Hab.* The Cape-York district of Queensland, Eastern Australia.

*Remark.* This bird is much smaller than *Cacomantis flabelliformis*, and, moreover, has much shorter wings, but assimilates very closely to that species in form and contour; it differs, however, not only from that and every other Australian cuckoo, but from all others I have yet seen from the islands to the northward; it is closely allied to a species inhabiting the Philippine Islands which I take to be the *Cacomantis sepulchralis* of Bonaparte, and more distantly to the *Cacomantis bronzina* of G. R. Gray.

*Ptilotis notata.*

Crown and all the upper surface greenish olive; lores, a line beneath the eye, and the anterior portion of the ear-coverts brownish black; from the angle of the mouth a pale-yellow stripe; posterior part of the ear-coverts pale yellow, assuming the form of a nearly round spot; under surface pale greyish olive, obscurely streaked with pale grey down the throat and breast; bill black, with a thick fleshy yellow gape; legs bluish.

Total length  $6\frac{1}{4}$  inches; bill  $1\frac{1}{16}$ , wing  $3\frac{3}{8}$ , tail  $2\frac{7}{8}$ , tarsi  $\frac{7}{8}$ .

*Habitat.* The Cape-York district of Queensland, Eastern Australia.



*Remark.* This species is allied, on the one hand, to the large *Ptilotis chrysotis*, and, on the other, to the small *P. gracilis*; its most remarkable feature, when compared with those birds, is its long and stout bill, which is both longer and stouter than that of the former species; in all its other admeasurements it is considerably smaller, while they much exceed those of the *P. gracilis*. It is also closely allied to, but quite distinct from, the *P. similis* of the Aru Islands. Gilbert collected this bird at Brown's Lagoon, on the 20th of December, 1844, when travelling with Leichardt from Moreton Bay to Port Essington; and I have lately received specimens through Mr. Jardine from the Cape-York district of Queensland.

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XXXV.—*Synopsis of the Asiatic Squirrels (Sciuridæ) in the Collection of the British Museum, describing one new Genus and some new Species.* By Dr. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S., V.P.Z.S., &c.

THE Squirrels form a very natural group. The species are very difficult to distinguish, on account of the general similarity that exists between them, and the variation that the specimens of the same kind present. The species appear to have a comparatively limited range, and therefore are most easily divided into geographical series.

The North-American species have been well studied and described by Dr. Spencer Baird, in his work on the North-American Mammalia.

The species of Asia and, especially, of South and Tropical America are very imperfectly known.

I have been studying the Asiatic specimens in the British Museum, many of which are the types of the species described by Horsfield, Hodgson, Blyth, Kelaart, Sykes, Elliot, Solomon Müller, and myself; and I have attempted to arrange them into groups, so as to bring together the species most nearly allied, and to enable the student easily to distinguish them. A synopsis of the species of Africa and America will follow. In these synopses I have confined myself to the study of specimens in the Museum Collection, which have been most carefully compared together.

The section *Sciurinae* of *Sciuridæ* is separated from the *Arctomyinae* by the small size of the upper front molar, or by its absence (for it is often early deciduous), and by the broad rounded form of the inner edge of the grinders. It may be thus divided:—





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