

8. Descriptions of five new Species of Birds from Queensland, and of the Egg of *Chlamydodera maculata*. By E. P. RAMSAY, C.M.Z.S.

[Received September 19, 1874.]

1. *CYPSELUS TERRÆ-REGINÆ*, sp. nov.

Whole of the upper surface, except the rump, very dark sooty brown tinged with metallic lustre, being of a darker brown on the outer webs and paler on the inner webs of the wing-feathers; across the rump a greyish white band having a narrow line of dark brown down the shaft of each feather; whole of the under surface dull greyish brown, of a silky texture and somewhat glossy; under surface of wings and tail and the under tail-coverts of a darker tint, the basal half of all the feathers on the body nearly black; bill black; feet blackish brown; iris dark brown.

Total length from 4 to 4·2 inches; bill from the nostril 0·1, from forehead 0·2, from angle of the mouth 0·45; wing from flexure 4·4; tail 2·1 to 2·4; tarsi 0·35.

The sexes of this Swift are alike in plumage and size. The texture of the plumage is remarkably soft, and to the touch resembles the fur of a Bat.

This species frequents the north-east coast ranges near Cardwell, Rockingham Bay, where it is tolerably plentiful, but very difficult to procure, from its small size and swift flight. Small flocks may be seen flying to and fro over the clearer parts of the lower spurs of the coast ranges; and frequently the same troop returns to the same open ground day after day; towards evening others may be found sweeping over the tops of the scrubs and about precipitous sides of the rocky ridges, where they doubtless breed. I found several young or immature-plumaged birds; and none amongst those I obtained had the tail fully grown. I have never seen this species in any other part of Australia than near Rockingham Bay. It was observed in the neighbourhood of Cardwell during October 1873, and when I left in April 1874 was still numerous there. For the first knowledge of this and several other new and rare species I am indebted to Inspector Robert Johnstone, of the police force on the Herbert river near Cardwell, as well as for much valuable information on the natural history of that interesting region.

2. *ÆLURÆDUS MACULOSUS*, sp. nov.

The whole of the head, including the chin, feathers at the base of the lower mandible, and ear-coverts, black, having a spot of white tinged with olive-green at the end of each feather; the spots on the back of the head and neck become more distinctly tinged with olive-green as they approach the shoulders, where they are lost in the brown-green margin of the feathers, which, on their under surface, are of a bluish green tint.

A narrow line down the centre of each feather on the top of the head and neck black; line over the eye and just in front of it white, tinged with olive-green; lower part of the ear-coverts black; upper part immediately behind the eye centred with white and tinged slightly with olive-green; sides of the lower part of the neck olive-green, each feather indistinctly marked with a white-brown spot.

Whole of the under surface olive-green, being brightest on the flanks, each feather on the chest centred with a conspicuous and somewhat heart-shaped blotch of white, which on the abdomen and flanks becomes lanceolate in form, more acute on the feathers between the flanks and round the vent, which are nearly white, having a brownish crescentic mark near the margin; the spots on the abdomen are almost obsolete. Under tail-coverts olive-green, centred and broadly margined with white tinged with olive-green; the basal portion of all the feathers brown; under surface of the tail brown, with a tinge of bluish green in certain lights; all but the two centre tail-feathers tipped with white on both surfaces; the under surface of the wings, inner webs of primaries, and secondaries dark brown, becoming almost white on the margins of the inner webs. The inner webs of primaries and secondaries, and the basal part of the inner webs of the tertiaries blackish brown on the upper surface; the margin of the wings and under wing-coverts white, with a somewhat crescent-shaped mark of dark brown, margined with green, in the centre; the basal portion of the feathers dark brown. The narrow outer web of the primaries above bluish-green; all the upper surface from the back of neck and mantle bright grass-green; on the tertiaries to approximate secondaries a small spot of white at the tips of the outer webs only; some of the lesser wing-coverts have also a similar spot in certain specimens; and a few of the feathers between the shoulders have a bluish green tinge; two centre tail-feathers and the outer webs of all except the first feather on either side bright grass-green above; the lower portion of the outer web of the first tail-feather on either side tinged with green; the inner webs of all the tail-feathers except the two centre ones blackish brown above, tinged with green near the shafts of the feathers, but becoming blackish brown near the tips, which end in a white marginal spot more largely developed on the inner webs and of greater extent on the outer feathers, diminishing into a narrow white line on those next the centre tail-feathers. Bill light horn-colour.

Total length 10 to 11 inches; bill from forehead 1, from eye 1.9 to 2, from nostril 0.6, from angle of the mouth 1.45, width at base 0.5; wing from flexure 5.5; tail 4.3; tarsi 1.6 to 1.8, of a dark bluish horn-colour. Claws light brown.

The bill is of a pale brown, whilst on the margins and sides it is brownish or yellowish brown, about the base strong and powerful. The feet and legs are blackish horn-brown in the dried skins. The sexes are alike in plumage. Some of my specimens, apparently more adult and in full moult at the time they were shot, have dull brown instead of whitish spots on the black feathers on the head and face: these spots in young birds are washed with olive-green.

This new species is at least one quarter less in size than the New-South-Wales bird, *Æ. smithii*, and is only found on the East-Coast ranges, about Cardwell, at Rockingham Bay. Several specimens were obtained, but unfortunately so late in the season that the plumage was much worn and discoloured. As far as I am aware, their food is exclusively fruit, which may be found in abundance in the dense jungles and scrubs which clothe the sides of the ranges.

This species may easily be distinguished from *Æ. smithii* by the black and white markings about the head and face, and the large elongated heart-shaped spots on the under surface.

Its note resembles that of *Æ. smithii*, but is not so distinct a cry, and less bat-like, clearer, and more of a whistle. They assemble in small flocks of from ten to twenty in number, and frequent the palms and native fruit-trees in company with *Ptilonopus superbis* and *Carpophaga assimilis*. They are also found feeding in the immense fig-trees which abound in the scrubs.

3. PTILOTIS FRENATA, nov. sp.

Of this new species, for which I beg leave to propose the name of *P. frenata*, on account of the markings at the base of the bill and round the face, some few individuals were obtained frequenting the Eucalypti while in blossom, near the margin of a swamp in the Cardwell district.

The birds were shot by my (then) collector, Mr. Broadbent, who is already well known as an enthusiastic and careful taxidermist. To Mr. Broadbent's researches my collection is also indebted for the first specimen of *Eopsaltria inornata*.

Description.—Whole of the upper surface dull brown; head, lores, and nape of neck blackish brown, the feathers having indistinct lunulate markings and a gloss of olive in certain lights; a semi-bare space below the eye has a few minute buffy white feathers; behind the eye a semilunar patch of white feathers tipped with black, which, extending in a narrow line, almost encircles that organ. Eye-lashes black; ear-coverts black, above them immediately behind the eye is a small tuft of bright wax-yellow feathers joining a large triangular patch of light greyish brown feathers on the side of the neck, which has the upper portion of it, nearest the ear-coverts, tinged with olive; a narrow indistinct line of yellow on either side bounding the ear-coverts below, extending obliquely to the lower part of the chin, where, meeting in an angle, they form an indistinct yellow patch on the throat. Chin and remainder of the under surface dull brown, slightly darker in tint on the breast and sides of the neck, lighter on the centre of the abdomen and under tail-coverts; across the chest are indistinct wavy lines of a darker tint, on the flanks indistinct lanceolate markings of the same tint. Under surface of the shoulders, inner margins of tertiaries, secondaries, and the basal portions of inner margins of the primaries light buff. The outer webs of the spurious wing-feathers, the tertiaries, and secondaries, with some of the primaries, are on the upper surface tinged with olive. Bill black, with the basal portion (except the culmen) yellow. The

gape, with a narrow fleshy appendage, yellow. Feet and tarsi of a dark brown.

Total length 8.5 inches; bill from angle of mouth 1.05 inch, from feathers at the nostrils 0.65, from forehead 1.05, height at nostrils 0.2, breadth 0.2; wing from flexure 4.05; tail 3.6; tarsi 0.35.

Hab. Rockingham Bay.

Sexes alike in plumage. One specimen, said to be a male, is considerably smaller in all its measurements, which are as follows:—Total length 7.5 inches; wing 3.65; tail 3.25; bill from angle of the mouth 0.95, from feathers at nostrils 0.6 inch, from forehead 0.9, height at nostril 0.2, breadth 0.2.

4. *EOPSALTRIA* (?) *INORNATA*, nov. sp.

Whole of the head dull slate-brown, paler round the eye, lores darker; lower part of the neck and all the upper surface washed with olive; wings above dark brown, having the margins washed with olive; inner edge of wing light olive-yellow, almost citron-colour. Under wing-coverts white, washed with citron-yellow; inner margins of tertiaries, secondaries, and the basal margins of the primaries whitish; throat greyish white; chest brownish grey, washed with olive on the lower sides; flanks, abdomen, and under tail-coverts citron-yellow; under surface of tail brown, shafts of feathers white; upper surface of the tail slightly darker brown, the exposed portions of the feathers washed with olive. Bill and legs black.

Total length $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches; bill from forehead 0.5, from angle of the mouth 0.65, height at base 0.18, breadth 0.15; wing from flexure 3; tail 2.3; tarsi 0.7.

Hab. Dense scrubs of the N.E. coast of Rockingham Bay and Endeavour river, &c.

5. *RHIPIDURA* *SUPERCILIOSA*, nov. sp.

Description (♂).—Head dark slate-colour; a very conspicuous line over the eye; the throat and chin white; the whole of the upper surface dark slate-brown; spurious wing-feathers with a spot of light brown at the tips; upper wing-coverts marked faintly at the tips with white; the tertiaries and secondaries having a whitish line on the outer margin, which, becoming broader at the tips, forms an irregular spot tinged with brown; tail blackish brown above; across the chest a band of slate-brown, a few feathers in the centre of which are striped down the shaft with a narrow lanceolate mark of white. Abdomen and flanks buffy white; under surface of shoulders white, the basal portion of the feathers being dark brown. Under tail-coverts white; under surface of tail dark brown, having the outer feathers on either side tipped to the extent of one third of its entire length with white, which colour extends along the outer web to within one third of the length of the feathers of the base, which is dark brown, the next feather on either side having at the tip an oblong oblique patch of white about .7 inch in length, the third feather on either side having only a small margined spot of white at the tip of the outer edge. Bill and tarsi black.

Total length 10·5 inches from tip of bill; bill from forehead 0·6, from nostrils 0·3, from angle of mouth 0·75, in width 0·25; bristles black, in length 0·4; wing from flexure 3·2; tail 3·6.

Hab. Margins of scrubs and "opens," Rockingham Bay, Endeavour river, and N.E. coast.

Description of the Egg of Chlamydodera maculata.

In form elongated, tapering; shell thin and delicate, somewhat shining and smooth. Ground-colour of a delicate greenish-white tint, surrounded with narrow, wavy, twisted, irregular, thread-like lines of brown, dark umber, light umber brown, and a few blackish brown, which cross and recross each other, forming an irregular network round the centre and thicker end; towards the thinner end they are not so closely interwoven, and light brown lines appear as if beneath the surface of the shell, also a few black irregular-shaped linear markings, much broader than the rest, show conspicuously against the pale greenish white ground; and here and there, over the whole surface, are scattered ill-shapen figures resembling twos, threes, and fives (2, 3, 5), of various tints of colour.

Length 1·5 inch, breadth 1.

For the first specimen of this rare egg I am indebted to my friend J. B. White, Esq., who procured it at Springsure, some 200 miles inland from the N.E. coast.

November 17, 1874.

George Busk, Esq., F.R.S., Vice-President, in the Chair.

The Secretary read the following report on the additions to the Society's Menagerie during the month of October 1874 :—

The total number of registered additions to the Society's Menagerie during the month of October 1874 was 69; of which 4 were by birth, 29 by presentation, 24 by purchase, and 12 were received on deposit. The total number of departures during the same period by death and removals was 72.

The most noticeable additions during the month of October were as follows :—

1. A Gentoo Penguin (*Pygosceles tæniatus*) from the Falkland Islands, purchased October 22nd, being the first example of this species of Penguin received alive.

2. A Tooth-billed Pigeon (*Didunculus strigirostris*) from the Samoan Islands, deposited by Mrs. Boddam-Whetham, October 23rd, and subsequently presented to the Society by Mr. J. W. Boddam-Whetham.

The Secretary exhibited the egg referred to by the Rev. S. J. Whitmee, in his communication read March 17, 1874 (see P. Z. S. 1874, p. 184), as that of *Pareudiastes pacificus*, and an accompanying egg of the Samoan *Porphyrio*. In a letter recently received Mr.



Ramsay, Edward Pearson. 1875. "Descriptions of five new species of birds from Queensland and of the egg of *Chlamydodera maculata*." *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London* 1874, 601–605.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/90419>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/67178>

Holding Institution

Natural History Museum Library, London

Sponsored by

Natural History Museum Library, London

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>.