

Birds of the
North and North-West of Australia.
FROM NOTES AND SKINS MADE BY THE LATE CAPT.
T. H. BOWYER-BOWER.
BY GREGORY M. MATHEWS, F.R.S.E., F.L.S., M.B.O.U.

No. 4.

The following birds were collected by the late Bowyer-Bower in 1886. Most of them were shot near Derby, but a few were obtained at Thursday Island, off North Queensland,

and others at Palmerston, in the Northern Territory. These will be noted in the body of the work.

The notes have been worked up from the carefully kept notebook of the collector. The exceedingly accurate descriptions of the soft parts, marks Bowyer-Bower as a very keen observer. These were noted as soon as the specimen was killed, as on some occasions he notes "the bird had been dead some time before I saw it, so cannot be sure of the colour of the soft parts."

This young and ardent field naturalist was the means of first recording many birds from the North-west of Australia. His *Pisobia damascensis* is the only one to date recorded as killed in Australia.

Most of this collection that reached England is in either the British Museum or my own. Over 600 skins of 150 species and sub-species were collected.

cf. Ramsay, Proc. Linn. Soc., N.S.W., ser. ii., vol. I., p. 1,096, 1887, and vol. II., p. 165, 1887, where it will be seen that certain birds are recorded from Derby, but in this list that follows their real locality is given. Thus *Halcyon macleayi* is from Palmerston, *Colluricincla rufogaster* is from Thursday Island, as is also *Ptilotis notata*.

17. *SYNOICUS YPSILOPHORUS ROGERSI*. Dark brown Quail.

Coturnix australis rogersi (Mathews), Nov. Zool., Vol. XVIII., p. 179, 1912. Parry's Creek, North-west Australia.

Nos. 109, Male; 279, Male; 329, Male—June and September, 1886.

Length, 7.2 to 7.8 inches. Irides, dull red; bill, dark brown at the point, bluish at the base; legs and feet, yellow.

16. *CHRYSAUCHOENA HUMERALIS INEXPECTATA*. Western Barred-shouldered Dove.

Geopelia humeralis inexpectata (Mathews), Nov. Zool., Vol. XVIII., p. 186, 1912. Parry's Creek, North-west Australia.

No. 222—Male. Length, 12.6 inches. (27/8/86).

No. 236. Length, 12.8 inches. (29/8/86). Irides, straw yellow; orbital space, rose pink; bill, very pale bluish white; feet and legs, blood-red; nails, horn colour.

16. *GEOPELIA PLACIDA PLACIDA*. Northern Ground Dove.

Geopelia placida (Gould), Proc. Zool. Soc. (Lond.), 1844, p. 55. Port Essington.

No. 85. Length, 7.3 inches. (2/6/86). Irides, grey; orbital space, grey; bill, brown; legs and feet, flesh colour.

No. 235—Female. Length, 8.3 inches. (29/8/86). Irides, bluish white; orbital space, pale green; bill, light brown, becoming blue over the nostrils; feet and legs, flesh colour; scales, purple.

No. 455—Male. Length, 8.4 inches. (27/10/86). Irides, pale greenish white; orbital space and soft parts on bill, beautiful pale greenish white, tinged with blue on the lores, and slate colour showing chiefly on the soft parts of the bill; feet and legs, fleshy white, with purple scales.

No. 462—Male. Length, 8.4 inches. (28/10/86).

17. STICTOPELEIA CUNEATA MUNGI. Western Spotted-shouldered Dove.

Geopelia cuneata mungi (Mathews), Nov. Zool., Vol. XVIII., p. 187, 1912. Mungi, North-west Australia.

No. 238—Male. Length, 8.2 inches. (13/7/86).

No. 457—Female. Length, 7.9 inches. (27/10/86). Irides, red; eyelids, brown; orbital space, red; bill, dark brown, with its soft parts of a leaden colour; legs and feet, white.

18. PHAPS CHALCOPHTERA CONSOBRINA. Northern Bronze-winged Pigeon.

Phaps chalcoptera consobrina (Mathews), Nov. Zool., Vol. XVIII., p. 188, 1912. Parry's Creek, North-west Australia.

No. 313 = 312—Male. Length, 14.1 inches. (13/9/86).

No. 233—Female. Length, 13.3 inches. (12/7/86). Irides, brown; bill, dark brown; legs and feet, red.

A nest containing two young, about a fortnight old, was found on 13/10/86. The nest (which is a very slight structure and exceedingly small for the bird, is composed of twigs, and put together very roughly, like the majority of nests of the *Columbidae*) was placed in a small tree about 9 feet from the ground. On going near the tree the old bird left very quietly (and not with the noise always made with the wings as these birds take flight), and, flying to the ground about 10 yards from the tree, appeared to have a broken leg or wing. Suspecting these actions the bird was nevertheless followed

for some 25 yards, when it flew up and went away quite strong.

19. HISTRIOPHAPS HISTRIONICA ALISTERI. Northern Flock Pigeon.

Phaps histrionica alisteri (Mathews), Nov. Zool., Vol. XVIII., p. 189. 1912, Parry's Creek, North-west Australia.

No. 117. Length, 11.9 inches. (12/6/86). Irides and naked skin round the eye, black; bill, black; feet and legs, lilac, tinged on the back of the tarsus and soles of the feet with pink.

No. 123—Male. Length, 11.8 inches. (12/6/86).

No. 124—Male. Length, 11.9 inches. (14/6/86).

No. 157—Male. Length, 11.6 inches. (20/6/86).

No. 185—Male. Length, 11.9 inches. (26/6/86).

Nos. 198, 199—Female. Length, 11.5 inches. (27/6/86).

20. LOPHOPHAPS FERRUGINEA MUNGI. Pale Red-plumed Pigeon.
Lophophaps ferruginea mungi. (Mathews), Nov. Zool., Vol. XVIII., p. 190. 1912, Mungi, North-west Australia.

No. 383—Male. Length, 8.7 inches. (9/10/86).

No. 384—Female. Length, 7.7 inches. (9/10/86).

No. 385. Length, 7.9 inches. (10/10/86).

No. 394—Male. Length, 8.1 inches. (12/10/86).

No. 395—Male. Length, 7.8 inches. (12/10/86).

No. 396—Female. Length, 7.7 inches. (12/10/86).

No. 397—Female. Length 7.9 inches. (12/10/86).

No. 405—Female. Length, 8.1 inches. (14/9/86).

No. 464—Male. Length, 8.1 inches. (28/10/86).

No. 470—Male. Length, 7.9 inches. (28/10/86).

No. 472—Female. Length, 8.1 inches. (29/10/86).

No. 473—Female. Length, 8 inches. (29/10/86).

No. 474—Male. Length, 7.8 inches. (29/10/86).

No. 379—Male. Length, 8.7 inches. (8/10/86). Irides, bright orange, of a redder and more fiery tint next the pupil; eyelid and naked skin round the eye, bright coral red; bill and soft skin round nostrils, black; feet and legs, deep lead,

with a purplish tint, which is more conspicuous on the back of the tarsi; claws, black.

No. 380—Male. Length, 8.1 inches. (8/10/86). In their flight these birds somewhat resemble the quail, but do not fly so swiftly; they make a noise very similar to that bird on rising, but fly straighter and to about the same distance, the latter portion being accomplished with outspread wings. On regaining the ground they run quickly, and are very quail-like in their movements. During the heat of the day, when in the shade it is about 105 to 110, these lovely birds may be seen on the bare sandstone rocks in the full enjoyment, apparently, of the sun's powerful rays, and when in such a position are with great difficulty seen, owing to the similarity of the colour of the stone. They appear very easily killed; indeed, some shot at 25 yards with small collecting charges (viz., $\frac{1}{2}$ drachm powder and some dust shot) were quite dead. If wounded they flutter, and the feathers come out in large quantities. They are difficult birds to skin, as both skin and flesh are very tender and difficult to separate. They are good eating. Although there are generally from 6 to 15 in a flock they do not fly together as quails do, but go off in twos or threes, often in quite opposite directions. They make no note, and only once were seen to perch on a dead fallen tree.

21. *Ocyphaps lophotes whitlocki*. Western Crested Pigeon.

Ocyphaps lophotes whitlocki (Mathews), Nov. Zool., Vol. XVIII., p. 191. 1912, East Murchison, West Australia.

No. 516—Female. Length, 13.2 inches. (5/11/06).

No. 517—Male. Length, 13.4 inches. (5/11/86).

27. *Microtribonyx ventralis territorii*. Northern Black-tailed Native Hen.

Tribonyx ventralis territorii (Mathews), Nov. Zool., Vol. XVIII., p. 195. 1912, Alexandra, Northern Territory.