



AILURÆDUS MELANOCEPHALUS, Ramsay.

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Black-naped Cat-bird.

Ælurædus melanocephalus, Ramsay, Proc. Linn. Soc. N. S. Wales, viii. p. 25 (1883).—Finsch u. Meyer, Zeitschr. ges. Orn. ii. p. 394 (1885).

WE have already alluded in the present work to the differences between *Ælurædus melanotis*, from the Aru Islands, and *Æ. arfakianus*, from Mount Arfak; but at the time when we wrote we were unable to convince ourselves that those two species were specifically distinct. We now consider that we were in error, since we have seen additional examples of both, and now we have a third representative species in *Æ. melanocephalus* from South-eastern New Guinea. Of this latter bird we have seen several specimens collected by Mr. Goldie and Mr. H. O. Forbes in the Astrolabe Mountains, and by Mr. Hunstein in the Horseshoe range of the Owen Stanley Mountains.

The present species differs from *Æ. arfakianus* by its black lores and chin and in the uniform character of the breast and abdomen.

We subjoin a description of an adult male collected by Mr. Hunstein on the Owen Stanley Mountains:—

Adult male. General colour above grass-green, the upper tail-coverts slightly washed with lighter green; the upper mantle varied with ovate spots of ochreous buff in the centre of the feathers; wing-coverts like the back, the median and greater coverts and the bastard-wing faintly tipped with ashy ochreous buff; primary-coverts and quills externally green like the back, the primaries washed with bluish on the outer web, the secondaries tipped with ochreous white, less distinct on the primaries; tail-feathers dark green on the outer web, black internally, all the feathers tipped with white, increasing in extent towards the outer ones; crown of head black, with ovate spots of ochreous buff, smaller on the forehead and nape, the latter being almost entirely black; hind neck ochreous buff, the feathers margined with black; lores black, surmounted by a line of ochreous-buff-spotted feathers; feathers round eye and ear-coverts black, with a line of buff-spotted feathers below the eye; behind the ear-coverts a line of whitish down the sides of the neck; fore part of cheeks black, as well as the chin; throat and sides of neck ochreous buff, mottled with black edges to the feathers; fore neck and remainder of under surface of body rufescent ochre, with greenish edges on the feathers of the chest, the breast and abdomen more uniform; all the feathers with more or less distinct white shaft-lines; sides of body and flanks like the breast, and washed with greenish; thighs dull greenish; under tail-coverts like the abdomen, with white shaft-lines; under wing-coverts and axillaries ashy, tipped with whitish; quills below dusky, ashy along the inner edge. Total length 11·5 inches, culmen 1·3, wing 5·7, tail 4·6, tarsus 1·7.

The figure in the Plate represents an adult male of the natural size, drawn from a specimen collected by Mr. H. O. Forbes.

[R. B. S.]



Gould, John and Sharpe, Richard Bowdler. 1888. "Ailuroedus melanocephalus, Black-naped Cat-bird [Pl. 42]." *The birds of New Guinea and the adjacent Papuan islands : including many new species recently discovered in Australia* 1(XXIV), -. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.322641>.

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