*Sphenura Broadbenti*, M'Coy.

(Rufous-headed Bristle-bird.)

All the back, shoulders, and flanks dull brown; wings and tail of a slightly richer and more rufous brown, the tail-feathers in some lights seeming to be transversely marked with faint, glossy, transverse, narrow bands of slightly lighter shade; crown of head, nape, and ear-coverts rich chestnut or rufous brown; triangular spot in front of and slightly over the eye, and the throat, greyish white; feathers of breast lunulated, greyish white at margin, dull brownish like the flanks at base; the greyish white extends in a narrow track along the middle of the abdomen; legs, feet, upper part and tip of bill dark brown; lateral margins of upper mandible and basal portion of lower one yellowish.

Length 7 inches 9 lines; wings 3 inches 4½ lines; tail 4 inches 10 lines; bill, from gape, 11½ lines, from forehead 7 lines; tarsus 1 inch 2 lines.

The greater length of the wing, tarsus, and bill easily distinguish this species from the two previously known, as well as the rufous head and ears and the greyish-white instead of buff colour over the front of the eye. I am uncertain what value should be attached to the much darker and stronger lunulation of the breast-feathers, as I have only seen one specimen, and am not certain whether it has attained maturity. The bill is stronger, being deeper as well as longer, and slightly more arched in the culmen than in the *S. brachypterus*, to which it is most nearly related. The sixth primary is also slightly longer than the fifth and seventh, which are equal; the claws are rather stouter than in that species, and the three or four large rictal bristles are rather weaker.

The specimen described was presented to the museum at Melbourne by Mr. Broadbent, who shot it in December 1858 in a dense scrub twenty-four miles from Portland Bay, uttering a note like that of the English thrush, running over logs on the ground. I have not since seen another specimen.

Melbourne, Dec. 26, 1866.

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## XXXII.—*On the Identity of* Alepisaurus (*Lowe*) *with* Plagyodus (*Steller*). By Dr. Albert Günther.

Whilst engaged in the study of the Salmonoids described by Pallas, I met with the description of a fish discovered by Steller at the Kurile Islands, and named by him *Plagyodus* (Zoogr. Ross.-As. iii. pp. 383, 384). An examination of the notes left

by Steller and published by Pallas leaves scarcely any doubt that they refer to the same fish which was discovered by Mr. Lowe at Madeira, and named by him *Alepisaurus*. Later researches have shown the existence of the same genus in the sea of Van Diemen's Land and on the north-west coast of America; and specimens from the latter locality have been named *Caulopus* by Mr. Gill. The name given by Steller will take precedence of the others; so that the three species known will stand as—

1. *Plagyodus ferox*, Lowe. Atlantic; Van Diemen's Land.
2. —— *altivelis*, Poey. Cuba.
3. —— *borealis*, Gill (perhaps the species seen by Steller). North Pacific..

I add a translation of Steller's original notes, as Pallas's 'Zoographia' is not accessible to every naturalist:—

Among the papers of Steller there is mention of another fish, which he received in a dried state from the Kurile Islands, and thence described imperfectly under the name of *Plagyodus*. This, on account of its adipose fin, seems to belong to the Salmon Trouts, unless, indeed, it be an anomalous species of *Blennius*. To this fish, extraordinary both in structure and appearance, says Steller, I give this name on account of the breadth and tenuity of its teeth.

In a dried state the specimen was 44 English inches in length, the length of the pectoral fins being 6 inches, the breadth 2 inches. It was elongate, somewhat slender, rather tapering towards the caudal, and more flattened. Head large, broad, compressed on the sides, to some extent resembling that of a Pike, with the lower jaw very slightly the longest. Jaws white, very thin, lamelliform. Maxillaries 4 inches long from the tip to the angle of the mouth, with prominent, very sharp, equidistant teeth, 1½ line long.

From the upper mandible, not far from the end of the mouth, project two, or even more, long, broad, flat, very pointed, pellucid teeth. At the distance of one inch from this point are many very pointed, flat teeth, situated obliquely towards the angle of the mouth; to these correspond as many teeth of a similar character in the lower jaw; but for the space of half an inch before the angle both mandibles are destitute of teeth. In the lower jaw, about one inch from the tip, there are some small teeth; after these there are three teeth, 3 lines in length; and the teeth are distributed in series in this manner in either jaw. The fish is doubtless rapacious, and bites very sharply. I have called it *Plagyodus*, on account of its broad and thin teeth, which are unlike those of any other fish with which I am

acquainted. The head has a sudden elevation over the eyes, towards the neck, afterwards becoming broader. The external lamellæ of the gill-cover are very finely radiated; the lamellæ on the summit of the head above the eyes are thin and radiated from the centre in a similar manner. Ossicles of gill-membrane four or five in number, very thin. This membrane joins to the lower jaw, and almost attains the tip of the mandible; hence the jaws, on account of the magnitude of the prey, can be dilated to a great extent; and this is also much facilitated by the very singular structure of the mandible, which is composed of small broad bones like the branchiostegal rays of other fish.

Postbranchial fins very long, sharply pointed. The dorsal fin extends beyond two-thirds of the length of the fish; the second dorsal takes its rise nine inches from the extremity of the tail, and is cutaneous in texture, as it usually is in Salmon, but very thin and without ossicles. The two ventrals are at the distance of 22½ inches from the snout, being 2½ inches long and 5 inches before the adipose fin; another simple fin commences on the belly, probably behind the anus; for there does not appear to be a vestige of the anal. Caudal fin 3 inches long, broad, with the posterior margin apparently forming the segment of a circle. No further characters are distinguishable, on account of the dried state of the specimen.

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## XXXIII.—*On the* Menispermaceæ.

By John Miers, F.R.S., F.L.S., &c.

[Continued from p. 95.]

### 42. Chondodendron.

This genus, proposed in 1794 by the authors of the 'Flora Peruviana' (Prodr. 132) has been recognized by few botanists. De Candolle (Syst. i. 522) referred the typical plant to *Cocculus*, while Persoon regarded it as a species of *Epibaterium* (Ench. ii. 561). Original specimens exist in the herbaria of the British Museum and of M. de Boissier, each with a label in Ruiz's handwriting; so that the identification of the genus is placed beyond doubt: this is a fact of some importance, because hitherto its real characters have been involved in much obscurity. Pöppig in 1838 described and figured a plant (also from Peru) under the name of *Chondodendron convolvulaceum*, which he conceived to be a second species with female flowers: but in this reference he was greatly mistaken; for it belongs to my genus *Odontocarya*; and this mistake has given rise to the many misconceptions that have been entertained concerning the genus. When