

August 16th by Mr. W. E. Oates, being the first example we have received of this scarce bird.

The total number of registered additions to the Society's Menagerie during the month of September was 104; of these, 43 were acquired by presentation, 22 by purchase, 16 by birth, 8 by exchange, and 15 were received on deposit. The total number of departures during the same period by death and removals was 111.

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

1. A White-faced Owl (*Sceloglaux albifacies*) from New Zealand, purchased 3rd September 1875, new to the collection.

2. A wild Dog, presented by Mr. Mumford, 7th Sept. 1875. This animal was formerly in Manders's Travelling Menagerie, and was sold when that collection was dispersed by auction in the Agricultural Hall in August last, to Mr. Mumford, who has obligingly presented it to the Society. Its origin is unknown; but, as far as can be ascertained from examination of the living specimen, it would appear to be an adult male of the Wild Dog of Sumatra (*Canis rutilans*, Temm.). It has been placed in the same cage along with its near ally, the female Indian Wild Dog (*Canis primævus*), received from Lord Northbrook in March last.

3. An American Darter (*Plotus anhinga*), from South America, purchased 30th September, 1875. The Society now possesses two living examples of this interesting bird. The first one, obtained 28th December, 1872 (see P. Z. S. 1873, p. 2, where there is an excellent drawing of this bird), is now in adult plumage; the last arrival is in immature dress.

The following translation of a letter addressed to the Secretary by M. L. M. D'Albertis, C.M.Z.S., was read:—

“Yule Island, May 24, 1875.

“Since the 14th of March I am on this island, at the south of New Guinea, from which it is divided by a few miles of sea only. I have already made several excursions on the Papuan coast, and succeeded in penetrating a little way inland—not really far, it is true, but far considering the circumstances of my situation, and the country in which I am.

“First of all, I may observe that the general aspect of the country resembles that of the north of Australia much more than the north of New Guinea. On the coast the beautiful forest-trees are wanting, and *Eucalypti* abound in their place, and there are large open spaces covered only with long grasses and small shrubs or “scrub,” as you call it. There are also lagunes. The climate is dryer than in the north. When I ascended the mountains a little and penetrated the interior, the Australian plants disappeared, and those more specially Papuan were again found. In the same way as the flora, the fauna of the coast shows much affinity to that of Northern Australia; and in one of the lagunes I have seen in abundance *Parra gallinacea*, *Porphyrio melanotus*, and a species of *Lobivanellus*, of which I cannot tell

the name certainly, as I have not yet obtained specimens. Moreover, at early dawn and after sunset I have several times heard the notes of a *Dacelo* which might be *D. leachi*; and in this island for some time *Scythrops australis* was common, while on the opposite coast of New Guinea I obtained good examples of *Chlamydodera cerviniventris*. I could add the names of many other Australian species. On the other hand, on the mountains, besides *Paradisea raggiana*, there are to be found *Cicinnurus regius*, *Pitta novæ guineæ*, *Eupetes cærulescens*, and *Campephaga aurulenta*. Of the last I obtained the female, which differs from the male in having the throat cinereous. But these are not the only species which give a Papuan tint to the mountain-birds; for there is also to be met with *Lophorina atra*, of which I have seen many feathers used by the natives for ornament, as also of *Sericulus aureus*, called by the natives "*Horobora*." Certainly along with the *Sericulus* and *Lophorina* would be found the other Paradise-birds that in the north inhabit the same localities as these species.

"Serpents I find much more numerous here than in the north of New Guinea, especially the venomous ones, and not only of Australian genera, but even of Australian species. Of *Acanthophis antarctica* I have obtained two examples, which differ slightly from each other, and very much from the Australian form; but I take it for the same species. The Coleoptera and Lepidoptera are, like the birds, near the coast more Australian than Papuan; and the reverse is the case in the interior. But *Pieris aruna*, which is so common at Cape York, I have found also on the mountains.

"Up to the present time I have not formed an exact idea as to the Mammals, but am inclined to believe that they are very scarce. I have only obtained a *Cuscus* (probably one of many varieties of *C. maculatus*), a *Belideus*, a few species of insectivorous Bats, a *Pteropus*, two Bats, and the so-called *Sus papuensis*, of which last I have not seen two alike amongst a hundred. The *Halmaturus luctuosus* is very common, inhabiting the mountains as well as the plain—but always where the forest is most dense. It abounds on the lower hills, and forms one of the principal sources of food for the natives, who capture it in numbers in strong nets. I have had the opportunity of examining a large number of this species, and find them identical with the individual described by me in the 'Proceedings'*, which, I hope, is still living in the Society's Gardens. But upon further examination I find that the canine teeth, which did not exist in the individual described by me at the time of my description and even subsequently, are, on the contrary, always present in examples of every age which I have recently examined here. Consequently, after considering its dentary system, I have come to the conclusion that this species is not correctly placed in the genus *Halmaturus*, but ought to be referred to the genus *Dorcopsis*, to which, as it appears to me, its principal generic characters assimilate it rather than to any other genus of Macropodidæ. The Kangaroos which Dr. Beccari sent from the Aroo Islands to the Museo Civico of Genoa may also belong to the genus *Dorcopsis*, but are certainly distinct from *D. luctuosa*, as I think

* P. Z. S. 1874, p. 110; see also P. Z. S. 1874, p. 247, pl. xlii.

the present animal should now be called. I have also obtained a second species of Kangaroo, which I believe to be new, but have not been able to determine accurately, from the specimen being immature and its dentition imperfect*. The adult animal, of which I have seen several individuals in the forest, is larger than *D. luctuosa*.

"In the river, along which I penetrated into the interior some way, Crocodiles were abundant. In two hours I saw nine, large and small, but only one of really considerable size. Here also near this island on calm days I have often seen them; and, judging from their heads, which they thrust out of the water, they must be of large size. They seem to have fixed places in which they pass many hours of the day; for passing many times I always see them at the same posts.

"I was rather fortunate in my excursion into the mountains; for I found *Paradisea raggiana*, and obtained some beautiful specimens in full dress. In its voice, in its movements, and in its attitudes, it perfectly resembles the other species of the genus. It feeds on fruit; and I could find no trace of insects in the seven individuals which I prepared. It inhabits the dense forest, and is generally found near the ravines—perhaps because the trees on the fruit of which it feeds prefer the neighbourhood of water. The female is always smaller in size than the male; and I find this sex less abundant, because, as I believe, it is the season of incubation. The female is more like the same sex of *P. apoda* than that of *P. papuana*. The young male is like the female, but often recognizable by having distinguishable traces of the yellow collar which in the old male divides the green of the throat from the breast-feathers. The irides are of a rather bright yellow, and the feet lead-colour with a reddish tinge. The long flank-feathers in individuals recently killed have a very bright tint, which they lose in a few days—even in a few hours. The two middle tail-feathers are filiform, as those of *P. apoda* and *P. papuana*, and in no stage of development resemble those of *P. rubra*. These two feathers are not so long as in *P. apoda*, and about equal to those of *P. papuana*. Like its sister species, *P. raggiana* is an inquisitive bird, and often approaches from branch to branch within a few yards of the hunter, and remains motionless for some seconds to observe its pursuer, stretching out its neck, flapping its wings and emitting a peculiar cry, upon the sound of which other individuals come forward to join it. When one is wounded and cries out, many others come forward as if to protect it, and approach quite near, descending to the lowest boughs. The adult males frequent the tops of the highest trees, as Mr. Wallace observed in the other species, and as I also remarked in my former expedition. As regards the nidification I have as yet obtained no information."

A letter was read from Mr. Walter J. Hoffman, dated Reading, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., July 15th 1875, containing a sketch of a horn of an American Pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*) with a double prong.

* [Probably *Macropus papuensis*, lately described by Peters and Doria from M. d'Albertis's specimens, Ann. Mus. Gen. vii. p. 344.—P. L. S.]



Sclater, Philip Lutley. 1875. "[footnote to a letter addressed to the Secretary by M.L.M.D. D'Albertis]." *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London* 1875, 530–532.

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