

assumed a feminine appearance ; but birds, on the contrary, when the function of the ovary was destroyed, put on the male character.

March 22nd, 1859.

Dr. Gray, F.R.S., V.P., in the Chair.

Mr. Gould exhibited and characterized two new species of birds, one belonging to the family *Cuculidæ*, the other to the *Coturniceæ*, and remarkable as forming probably the smallest species of the groups to which they respectively pertained.

For a small Shining Cuckoo, killed at Port Essington, on the north coast of Australia, and of the same form and very nearly allied to the *Chrysococcyx lucidus* of New South Wales and the *C. basalis* of Java, Mr. Gould proposed the name of *Chrysococcyx minutillus* ; and for the Quail, which belonged to the genus *Excalfactoria* of Bonaparte, that of *Excalfactoria minima*.

The following are the descriptions of these new species :—

CHRYSOCOCCYX MINUTILLUS, Gould.

Head, all the upper surface, and wings shining bronzy-green ; all the under surface white, barred with bronzy-green, the bars being most distinct on the flanks ; primaries and secondaries white on the basal portion of their inner webs ; two centre tail feathers bronzy-green ; the next on each side bronzy-green on the outer web, rufous on the inner web, crossed by a broad band of black near the tip, and with an oval spot of white across the tip of the inner web ; the two next on each side bronzy-green on their outer webs, their inner webs rufous, with large spots of black near the shaft, most conspicuous in the outermost of the two feathers ; their inner webs are also crossed near the tip with a very broad band of black, and have an oval spot of white at the tip ; the outer feather on each side is barred alternately on the outer web with dull bronzy-green and dull white, and on the inner one with broad decided bars of black and white, and tipped with white ; bill black ; feet olive.

Total length $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches, bill $\frac{5}{8}$, wing $3\frac{1}{4}$, tail $2\frac{1}{2}$, tarsi $\frac{1}{2}$.

Remark.—This bird is perhaps more nearly allied to the Java species, *C. basalis* of Horsfield, than to the *C. lucidus* ; but it is as much smaller than the *C. basalis* as that bird is less than *C. lucidus*. The type of *C. basalis*, which is the only one I have seen, is not a fully adult bird ; and yet the measurement of its wing exceeds by half an inch that of the *C. minutillus*.

EXCALFACTORIA MINIMA, Gould.

Forehead and sides of the head grey ; crown of the head, all the upper surface, and wing-coverts reddish-brown, conspicuously spotted

and minutely freckled with brownish-black, a line of buff down the crown and nape, and a narrow line of brownish-white down the centre of the feathers, changing to broad and conspicuous stripes of buff on the lower part of the back and tail-coverts; wings pale brown; chin and throat black, on each side of which is an oblong patch of white encircled by a narrow line of black; below the black a broad crescent of white, fringed on the sides with black, and bounded below by a narrow semi-crescent of deep black; under surface grey, mottled on the flanks like the upper surface; line down the centre of the abdomen, thighs, and under tail-coverts chestnut-red; bill black; feet yellowish.

Total length 3 inches, bill $\frac{1}{4}$, wing $2\frac{1}{2}$, tarsi $\frac{5}{8}$.

Hab. Vicinity of Macassar, Celebes.

Remark.—For this, the most diminutive species of the *Gallinaceæ* yet discovered, we are indebted to the researches of A. R. Wallace, Esq. It is of precisely the same form and very nearly allied to, but quite distinct from, the well-known Chinese Quail, *Excalfactoria chinensis* (*Coturnix chinensis* of authors).

The following extract from a Letter received by Mr. S. Stevens from Mr. Wallace, dated Batchian, Moluccas, Oct. 29, 1858, was read:—

“Here I have been as yet only five days; but from the nature of the country, and what I have already done, I am inclined to think it may prove one of the best localities I have yet visited. Birds are as yet very scarce; but I still hope to get a fine collection, though I believe I have already the *finest and most wonderful* bird in the island. I had a good mind to keep it a secret, but I cannot resist telling you. I have a new *Bird of Paradise!* of a new genus!! quite unlike anything yet known, very curious and very handsome!!! When I can get a couple of pairs, I will send them overland, to see what a new Bird of Paradise will really fetch. Had I seen the bird in Ternate, I should never have believed it came from *here*, so far out of the hitherto supposed region of the *Paradiseidæ*. I consider it the *greatest* discovery I have yet made; and it gives me hopes of getting other species in Gilolo and Ceram. There is also here a species of Monkey—much further eastwards than in any other island; so you see this is a most curious locality, combining forms of the East and West of the Archipelago, yet with species peculiar to itself. It also differs from all the other Moluccas in its geological formation, containing iron, coal, copper, and gold, with a glorious forest vegetation and fine large mountain streams: it is a continent in miniature. The Dutch are working the coals; and there is a good road to the mines, which gives one easy access to the interior forests.

“I can do nothing at drawing birds, but send you a horrible sketch of my discovery, that you may not die of curiosity. I am told the wet season here is terrible, and it begins in December; so I shall probably have to leave then.”

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