

scapulio, pectore epigastrioque sordide arde-siaco-plumbeis; abdomine medio, crisso et sub-caudalibus sordide griseo-flaventibus; gutture colloque sparsim plumosis; cauda rufescente-brunneo alboque varia; pedibus pallide rubentibus; rostro flavido, basi obscuriore.

Long. c. $11\frac{1}{2}$ "; rostr. 9"; al. 7" 3"; tars. 1" 9".

The following are my descriptive notes referred to in Dr. Finsch's letter:—

Megapodius — ? Hab. Nuiŋo, one of the Friendly Islands. Native name *Malan*.

The whole of the plumage dark cinereous or slaty-brown, inclining to grey on the abdomen and under tail coverts; and tinged with reddish-brown on the back and on the upper surface of wings. The outermost primary is dark brown; the rest are ashy-grey with white shafts in their basal and middle portion, darkening into brown towards the tips. Bill dark horn colour. Feet dark brown; claws black, with horn-coloured edges. Irides ? (bright red in the stuffed specimen).

Extreme length $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches; wing from flexure $7\frac{1}{2}$; tail $2\frac{1}{2}$; tarsus 2; middle toe and claw 2; hind toe and claw $1\frac{3}{4}$; bill along the ridge $\frac{1}{2}$, along the edge of lower mandible 1 inch.

Plumage soft but compact. Wings short and rounded, indicating very feeble powers of flight. Legs strongly formed; toes furnished with ample claws; middle and outer nearly equal, inner $\frac{1}{2}$ inch shorter.

It is worthy of remark that both *Megapodius senex* and *M. eremita* rest on the authority of a single example; and in the absence of further specimens, the present bird would appear to have at least an equal claim to recognition as distinct. *M. Burnabyi*, as we have already seen, rests only on the authority of an egg from Hapai, and does not admit of any description, while *M. Stairi*, Gray, is not yet placed on the list of well-determined species.

If on further investigation the bird now under notice should prove to be new to science, it might appropriately be named *Megapodius Huttoni*.

An egg of this species, in the collection of the Auckland Museum, measures 3 inches in length by a diameter of $1\frac{5}{8}$. It is cream-coloured, of a regular elliptical form, and with a finely-granulate surface.

ART. V. — *On Zosterops lateralis in New Zealand, with an Account of its Migrations.* By WALTER BULLER, F.L.S., F.G.S., F.R.G.S.

(With Illustrations.)

[Read before the Wellington Philosophical Society, November 12, 1870.]

THE genus *Zosterops* comprises a rather numerous group of closely allied species, with a wide geographic distribution; but, as a genus, it is somewhat isolated in its affinities. Mr. Gould in placing it, very properly, next to the

Australian honey-eaters, observes,—“I have been influenced by their approximation to these birds both in form and habits, and to which they exhibit a further degree of affinity in the form and structure of their nests, but not in the colouring of their eggs, which are always blue.” But I would remark, that a stronger indication of this affinity than any mentioned by Mr. Gould, is to be found in the structure of the tongue, which is slightly pencilled at the tip, and proclaims at once the meliphagous habits of the group.

Members of this genus are scattered through Southern Africa, India, China, and Japan, but the species are most numerous in the sea-girt lands of Australasia and Polynesia, where each group of islands appears to have one or more species peculiar to itself. Mr. Gould records three well marked species from Australia, two from Lord Howe's Island, and two more from Norfolk and Phillip Islands. There is one species (*Zosterops flaviceps*) peculiar to the Fiji Islands, another (*Z. flavifrons*) to the New Hebrides Group, and another (*Z. conspicillata*) to the Ladrone or Marian Islands. Two species inhabit New Caledonia (*Z. xanthochroa* and *Z. griseonota*); one (*Z. cinerea*) is recorded from the Caroline Group, and another (*Z. melanops*) from the Loyalty Islands.

The New Zealand representative of the genus has been pronounced by competent authority to be identical with *Zosterops lateralis*, Lath. (= *cærulescens*, Gould), an inhabitant of Tasmania, New South Wales, and South Australia.

Generic characters.—Bill moderate and slightly curved, with the culmen curved, and the sides compressed to the tip which is acute and emarginated; the gonys long and slightly ascending; the gape furnished with very short weak bristles; the nostrils basal and placed in a broad groove, with the opening closed by a lunate scale. Wings moderate; with the first quill very small, and the fourth and fifth equal and longest. Tail moderate, broad and slightly emarginated in the middle. Tarsi rather longer than the middle toe, and covered in front with broad scales. Toes rather long; with the outer toe rather longer than the inner and united at its base; the hind toe long, strong and armed with a long curved claw. (*G. R. Gray.*)

ZOSTEROPS LATERALIS, Latham.

The Silver-eye.

Tau-hou, Kanohi-mowhiti, Poporohe, and Iringatau, of the natives.

Zosterops cærulescens, Gould. — *Hd. Bk. Birds of Australia*, Vol. i., p. 587.

Zosterops dorsalis, Vig. and Hors., in *Linn. Trans.*, Vol. xv., p. 235;

Gould, *Birds of Australia*, Fol., Vol. iv., pl. 81.

Sylvia lateralis, Lath.—*Ind. Orn. Supp.*, p. 1v.

Certhia cærulescens, Lath.—*Id.*, p. xxxviii.