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DESCRIPTIONS  
OF  
TEN NEW BIRDS

FROM THE

NÁGÁ HILLS AND MUNIPÚR VALLEY,  
N.E. FRONTIER OF BENGAL.

BY

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(Plates X., XI. & XII.)

The new birds from which the following descriptions have been drawn up were obtained by me during the field-season of 1872-73, while employed in charge of the Boundary Survey operations along the main watershed of the Brahmaputra and Irrawaddy rivers.

In presenting this paper I must not omit to acknowledge the very cordial and able assistance that has been given me by Viscount

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Walden, and the great use his fine collection has proved in the correct determination of so many of the birds I obtained.

Several birds from the same part of India yet remain to be identified; and I may mention the discovery of a *Bambusicola*, allied to *B. fytchii*, Anderson, with which my specimen agrees very closely, but the dimensions differ much. Thus:—

	Length. in.	Wing. in.	Tail. in.	Tarsus. in.	Bill at front. in.
Yunan bird . . . .	12·0	5·8	4·2	1·58	0·86
Khasi bird . . . .	14·5	6·25	5·0	1·2	0·90

If this should prove distinct on comparison of the specimens, I propose to name it *B. hopkinsoni*, after the able officer so long the Commissioner of Assam, and who took so great an interest in our survey operations.

The presence of this bird so far west, even if it should prove identical with Anderson's bird, is a point of very great interest in the distribution of some of the forms from Western China.

*Cypselus subfurcatus*, Blyth, identical with specimens from Amoy and Malacca, I also found breeding at Shillong in June, in the precipices that bound the Umiam valley—*Cypselus infumatus*, Selater (*tectorum* of Jerdon), being another Swift having an equally extended range and discovered about the same time; and the presence of other genera on this elevated promontory of the Gáro, Khási, and Nágá Hills, south of the alluvial valley of the Brahmaputra, marks most distinctly the extreme limit of the very marked Indo-Chinese and Malayan fauna, across which narrow belt many do not extend.

#### SITTA NAGAENSIS, n. sp.

*Description*.—Above slaty blue, palest on neck and head; two centre tail-feathers, shoulder of wing, and secondaries same colour rather brighter; quills brown-black; outer tail-feathers black, with a white patch on the inner web of the four outer, increasing outwards and in the outermost extending diagonally to the other web, all tipped grey and terminating in black; a black streak from lores through eye to ear-coverts and down side of neck. Beneath dull sordid white, purer on chin and throat, with a few white feathers bounding the ear-coverts; flanks, thighs, and under tail-coverts rusty chestnut, all the latter with a terminal white spot.

Bill black above, grey below; legs greenish black; irides dark brown.

Length 4·9 inches, wing 3·0, tail 1·75, tarsus 0·68, bill at front 0·58, extent of foot 1·2.

Inhabits the Nágá Hill-ranges, and was not uncommon.

#### GARRULAX GALBANUS, n. sp. (Plate X.)

*Description*.—Above pale pure olivaceous on head, with a brown tinge on the back; tail pale ashy brown; the four central feathers tipped umber-brown and barred; the four outer of the same colour in middle and broadly tipped with white; wing concolorous with

back; quills pale umber-brown, edged grey. Very narrow frontal band; base of lower mandible, lores through eyes and ear-coverts rich black; beneath dull yellow, purer on the throat, passing into olivaceous on the flanks; under tail-coverts white.

Bill black; legs ash-grey; irides red brown.

Length 9 inches, wing 3·65, tail 4·1, tarsus 1·35, bill at front 0·8.

I first obtained this very handsome bird in the Muniúpú valley, under the Koupru range, in February 1873. It associates in large flocks of from fifty to eighty or more, very noisy, following each other in a long string through the high grass, which they seem to frequent and prefer to the denser forest. When on the flight their white tail-feathers and under tail-coverts of the same colour make them very conspicuous. I observed it also on the head-waters of the Barak and other streams that flow into the Muniúpú valley on the north-east. The nearest allied species is *G. gularis*, M'Clelland, which is also yellow on breast; but is dark slate-grey above, with rufous on upper tail-coverts, flanks, abdomen, and vent.

#### GARRULAX ALBO-SUPERCILIARIS, n. sp.

*Description.*—Above, head and forehead reddish umber-brown, paling on back of neck into dull olivaceous brown on the rump and whole of the wing; tail pale red-brown; lores, a patch below eye, under ear-coverts, and supercilium, which extends backwards for 1·5 inch from the lores, white; upper portion of ear-coverts dark brown; chin and throat ruddy brown, paling on the breast into very pale dingy olivaceous, and into pale earthy ochre on abdomen and flanks; under tail-coverts rufous.

Bill black; legs fleshy brown; irides dull red.

Length 9 inches, wing 3·8, tail 4·2, tarsus 1·38, bill at front 0·7.

One specimen obtained in the Muniúpú valley, near Kaibi.

This dull-coloured *Garrulax* is very similar in coloration to *G. rufifrons*, Sw., of Java, which is a larger bird, and has no white superciliaries or lower ear-coverts. Another similar form is *G. cinereifrons*, Blyth, from Ceylou.

#### TROCHALOPTERON CINERACEUM, n. sp. (Plate XI.)

*Description.*—Above pale ashy olivaceous, greyer on the tail, which is black for 0·7" at the terminal end, then tipped broadly white. Wing: quills pale black, edged hoary grey; the secondaries tipped black, and their square tips edged white, in keeping with the tail. Primary coverts near the bastard wing black, forming a wing-spot. Top of head black, extending in a narrow line down back of neck; lores and a broad band over eyes and ear-coverts dingy white; a few pure white feathers below eyes merging into ear-coverts; a narrow black line extends from posterior corner of eye over the ear-coverts, and a moustachial streak of the same colour merges into indistinct spots. Chin white, with a few hairy black streaks; breast and underparts sullied white, with a slight vinous tinge on the former, and a dash of ruddy rufous on side of neck; ochraceous on belly and under tail-coverts.

Bill pale yellow shaded dark above; legs fleshy brown; irides pale ruddy ochre.

Length 8.75 inches, wing 3.22, tail 4.0, tarsus 1.25, bill at front 0.68.

In general coloration this bird approaches *T. variegatum*, Vigors. Its yellow bill and much smaller weaker legs and feet make it a very marked form of this genus.

*TROCHALOPTERON VIRGATUM*, n. sp.

*Description*.—Head dark rufous brown, olivaceous on back, paler and greyer on rump; tail olive-brown, with a slight tinge of rusty on basal half, finely and indistinctly barred; wing, first three quills grey on outer web, the rest and secondaries pale ferruginous merging into rich chestnut at their base; coverts of the latter colour, narrowly tipped ochre; feathers of winglet conspicuously white-centred, and lores chestnut, a white supercilium; ear-coverts pale rusty; chin and throat rich dark chestnut; breast and abdomen bright ochraceous; under tail-coverts darker brown. As viewed from below, the tail is grey brown, each feather faintly tipped with white.

All the feathers of the head, upper back, flanks, and breast are centred white or pale ochre; and those of the head and neck are rigid.

Bill black; legs pinky grey; irides pale brown.

Length 9 inches, wing 3.5, tail 4.85, tarsus 1.3, bill at front 0.6.

Obtained a single specimen near the village of Rázámi, Nágá Hills, under the Kopamedza ridge, 5000 feet.

This strikingly plumaged species is very close to *T. setiferum*, Hodgs., with which I compared it; but differs very materially. *T. lineatum*, Vigors, is another allied form.

*ACTINODURA WALDENI*, n. sp. (Plate XII.)

*Description*.—Head full-crested, extending back for more than an inch, hoary grey, edged pale; back rich brown with a greenish hue, becoming more rufous on the rump and upper tail-coverts; base of tail-feathers chestnut, for half their length narrowly barred with black, then black for terminal inch, the three outer tipped white; quills black, outer web chestnut at base, then barred with black, and the narrow terminal portion grey; primary coverts black, the winglet-feathers grey, barred black; ear-coverts hoary; side of head hair grey; chin, breast, and abdomen rufous brown, paler on chin and throat, the whole having a streaky appearance, the feathers being centred with a darker shade.

Bill grey; legs and feet fleshy brown; irides pale grey.

Length 8 inches, wing 3.48, tail 3.45, tarsus 1.2, bill at front 0.62.

I first shot this bird on the Peak of Japvo, at about 9000 feet, on the Burrail range, Nágá Hills.

This is a small form of *A. eyertoni*, which occurs in the same locality, every character being repeated in the two forms, yet each distinct; no better example of a gradual change in size and coloration could be shown.

**MALACOCERCUS (LAYARDIA) RUBIGINOSUS, n. sp.**

*Description.*—Above rich rusty brown, darker on the head, with black shafts to feathers; wings and tail of same colour, the latter distinctly barred; lores white, beneath pale rufescent, nearly white under chin, and pale on centre of abdomen.

Bill black, well curved; legs pale corneous or dull grey brown; irides nearly white.

Length 9·5 inches, wing 3·0, tail 4·8, tarsus 1·16, bill at front 0·62.

I first shot this bird in long grass near the Logtak Lake, Manipúr, and again obtained specimens near Kaibi in the same valley. It is essentially a grass-bird, with all the habits of *M. terricolor*, Hodgson. They associate about a dozen together, flying through the grass one after the other in a scattered line, never abiding long in one place.

By the kind assistance of R. B. Sharpe, Esq., of the British Museum, I have been able to examine a near ally of this bird marked *Malacocercus subrufus*, from Malabar, which is not so intensely rufous, has no white on the throat, is greyish on the head, and has a yellow lower mandible.

**PRINIA RUFULA, n. sp.**

*Description.*—Above, the head ashy brown, becoming more russet on back and pale rufous on rump and upper tail-coverts; tail brown, indistinctly barred, tipped white on the outer tail-feathers, with a subterminal dark spot; wing dark brown, with pale rusty brown edgings to primaries and secondaries; lores, round eye and ear-coverts pale ashy; below chin sullied white, greyer white on breast; ochraceous on abdomen; flanks and thighs pale brown.

Bill black, both above and below; legs pale corneous, with darker claws; irides ruddy ochre.

Length 4·75 inches, wing 1·82, tail 2·4, tarsus 0·75, bill at front 0·4.

This species was common in the Nágá Hills and Manipúr, and replaces *P. hodgsoni*, Blyth, on the Khási-Hills side. It is quite distinct from *P. gracilis*, which has a marked rufous forehead, and can be distinguished at a glance from the former bird, which is remarkably ashy, with dark ear-coverts.

**CISTICOLA MUNIPURENSIS, n. sp.**

*Description.*—Above dark umber-brown, feathers margined pale ochre on head, broader and more rufous on back; upper tail-coverts plain rufous brown; the feathers on nape are paler rufous and dark shafting subdued; tail dark umber, the two centre feathers margined rufous brown, viewed from below tipped whitish, with subterminal dark spots; white on chin, throat, and centre of abdomen rufescent on breast and flanks. Pale round eye.

Bill black above, pale beneath; legs fleshy brown.

Length 4·25 inches, wing 2·0, tail 1·65, tarsus 0·76, bill at front 0·40.

I obtained four specimens of this species in the reedy sides of the Logtak Lake, Manipúr valley. It differs on comparison with *C. schænicola*, Bonap., and *C. ruficollis*, Walden, which I also obtained, and is intermediate in coloration, and may be known at once by

the dark edging along the shafts of the centre tail-feathers, which in *C. ruficollis* are wholly dark, and in *C. schænicola* are banded broadly rufous, terminating black and white. It is very near to *C. rustica*, Wallace, from the Island of Bouru, which is more rufous on the head and breast.

*MUNIA SUBUNDULATA*, n. sp.

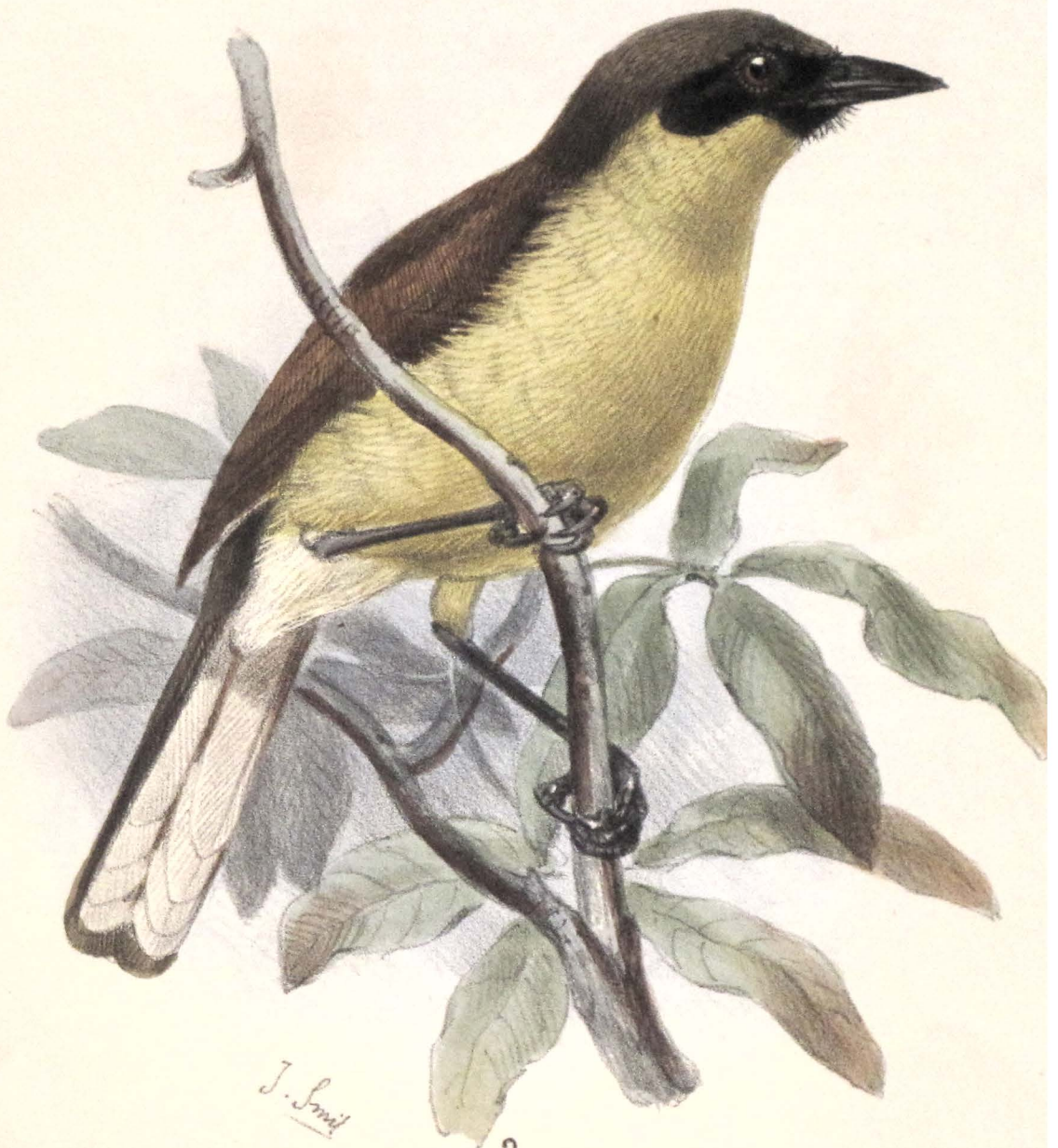
*Description.*—♂ above pale umber-brown, darker on the head, pale grey on rump, a few feathers edged paler; the upper tail-coverts dull yellow; tail-feathers olivaceous umber-brown, faintly edged with the same yellow tint; quills pale chestnut on outer web, umber-brown on inner, and indistinctly barred. Sides of head umber-brown, becoming dark chestnut on chin and throat; breast and flanks white, feathers very narrowly barred or margined rufous-brown; abdomen and under tail-coverts dull white, the latter sparingly streaked with brown; feathers of the back finely pale-shafted.

Bill dark grey; feet plumbeous; irides red.

Length 4·3 inches, wing 2·1, tail 1·7, tarsus ·55, bill at front 0·45.

♀ is duller brown above, with no white shafts to the feathers, a distinct green tinge upon the tail-feathers, otherwise as in *M. undulata*. Change of coloration in young males commences on centre of the throat, extending towards the base of bill into the dark chestnut, and towards breast into the undulated colouring of those parts.

Obtained in the Manipúr valley both on Lake Logtak and the head of the Barak river. It is very nearly allied to, but distinct from *M. undulata*, Latham, in which the undulations are broad, the general coloration more rufous, and the tail more pointed. It is also near to *M. nisoria* from Java and Malacca; but in that bird the tail-coverts are grey, with no trace of the fulvescent common to the two continental forms. Lord Walden was the first to notice this species as distinct, in specimens from Burmah, in his collection, which are identical with my own from Manipúr: he has kindly allowed me to now describe it.



*J. Smit*

$\frac{2}{3}$

J. Smit lith.

M. & N. Hanhart imp.

GARRULAX GALBANUS.







$\frac{2}{3}$

J. Smith lith.

M & N. Hanhart imp.

TROCHALOPTERON CINERACEUM.





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J. Smit lith.

M & N Hanhart sculp

ACTINODURA WALDENI.