

A NEW BIRD OF PARADISE.

By ROLLA P. CURRIE, B. A.

In looking over the Museum series of Paradiseidæ, Mr. J. H. Fleming, of Toronto, who has made a study of this family, noticed a specimen of *Cicinnurus* which, as he pointed out, differs from the King Bird of Paradise, *Cicinnurus regius* (Linnaeus), in several important particulars. Through the kindness of Mr. Robert Ridgway, Curator of the Division of Birds, I am enabled to present a description of this beautiful species, which I propose to call the Crimson Bird of Paradise.

CICINNURUS LYOGRUS,¹ new species.

Specific characters.—Differs from *C. regius* (Linnaeus) in having the pectoral shield nearly four times as long as in the latter, almost as long as broad; frontal plumes shorter, not projecting forward beyond middle of bill and not obscuring contour of skull; tail emarginate instead of rounded; outer web at end of central tail-shafts only two-thirds as wide near base, the width uniform for the greater portion of its length, instead of narrowing rapidly to tip, much more loosely coiled, the apical portion of naked, crossed tail-shafts divergent instead of convergent. The crimson of back is darker, crown and forehead orange-vermilion instead of orange-chrome; pectoral tufts darker and subterminal buff line on each plume much narrower, darker, and less conspicuous; pectoral shield, except a narrow edging on lower border, and tips of central tail-feathers grass-green instead of emerald-green, and tips of pectoral plumes yellowish emerald-green instead of gold-green. The primaries are also a duller orange-rufous.

Description.—Above glossy crimson, darker than in *C. regius*, the head pale orange-vermilion; feathers of the crown and forehead short, not obscuring the contour of the skull, the frontal feathers not extending forward beyond middle of bill; a dark green, almost black, spot above and bordering the eye. Throat, and sides of head and neck, dull crimson with purplish reflections, the feathers on lower border of throat narrowly tipped with buff, forming a convex line; fore neck and upper breast with a broad shield of metallic grass-green 65 millimeters in length, the feathers of lower border narrowly tipped with metallic

¹λύω, I loose; γύρος, whorl, referring to the tips of central tail-shafts.

emerald-green; on each side of upper breast is a tuft of long, apically-rounded, broccoli brown plumes, most of which are tipped with brilliant metallic yellowish emerald-green, each feather with a very narrow, inconspicuous buff line and a second, still narrower, coppery-brown one just before the green tip; outer webs of some of these plumes slightly washed with orange-rufous near base; lower breast, belly, and under tail-coverts white; under wing-coverts white. Scapulars crimson. Wings orange-rufous, the outer webs of primaries and outer secondaries edged with orange-vermilion, the inner secondaries and secondary coverts heavily washed with that color, primary coverts less heavily so. Upper tail coverts extending almost to tip of rectrices, orange-rufous, washed with orange-vermilion; tail emarginate, broccoli brown, the outer webs of feathers bordered with orange-rufous. Central pair of tail-feathers with their shafts crossed near base, greatly elongated, the webs very narrow basally, and entirely wanting beyond tips of other rectrices, except on the apical 70 millimeters of shaft, where there is a loosely-coiled, metallic grass-green outer web, whose greatest width is 8 millimeters; width of this web uniform for the greater portion of its extent; apical portion of naked, crossed shafts divergent. The green of these outer webs, as also that of pectoral tufts and shield, appears violet when held in Gadov's "Position C."¹ Wing, 200 mm.; tail (exclusive of central shaft-wires), 78 mm.; central pair of tail-feathers (straightened to extreme tips), 330 mm.; culmen, 42 mm.; tarsus, 50 mm.; middle toe, 37 mm.

Type.—No. 124628, U.S.N.M.; "New Guinea," received from A. Boucard.

The following table will serve to show the important structural differences between the two species:

Comparison of Ciciunurus lyogyrus with C. regius.

	<i>C. regius.</i>	<i>C. lyogyrus.</i>
Pectoral shield.....	One-fourth as long as broad.....	Nearly as long as broad.
Frontal plumes.....	Long, obscuring contour of head, reaching forward beyond middle of bill.	Short, not obscuring contour of head, not reaching beyond middle of bill.
Tail.....	Rounded.....	Emarginate.
Central tail-shafts.....	Crossed near base, converging before tips.	Crossed near base, diverging before tips.
Outer web at tips of central tail-shafts.	Tightly coiled, discoid; greatest width, 12 mm., rapidly narrowing to tip.	Loosely coiled; greatest width, 8 mm., uniform for greater portion of length.

It is unfortunate that the specimen is not accompanied by a more definite locality, so that some light might be thrown upon the habitat of the species. It would appear that it is either very rare or that it inhabits some little-explored portion of New Guinea proper or, possibly, some other island of the Papuan group.

The Hon. Walter Rothschild has recently² separated specimens of *C.*

¹ In this position the bird is held on nearly the same level with, and between, the eye and the light. The other metallic colors given in this description appear when the bird is held in "Position B," the eye being between the light and the bird, and the parts described placed vertically to the light.

² *Novitates Zoologicae*, III, 1896, p. 10.

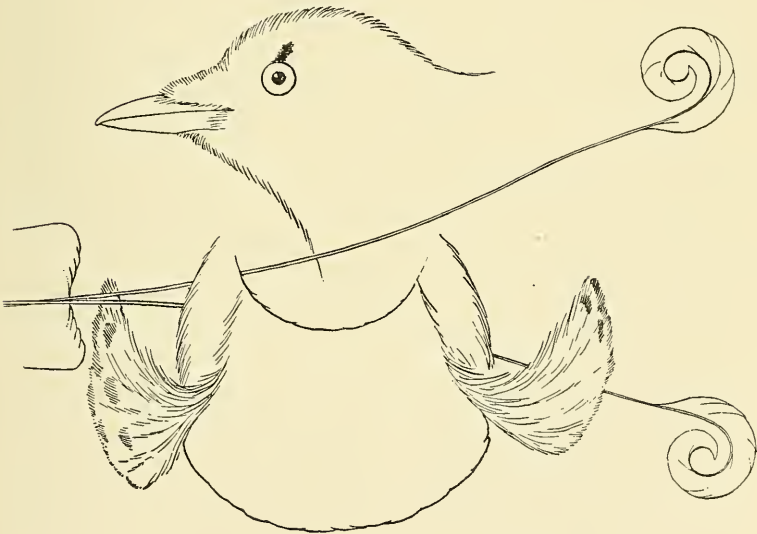
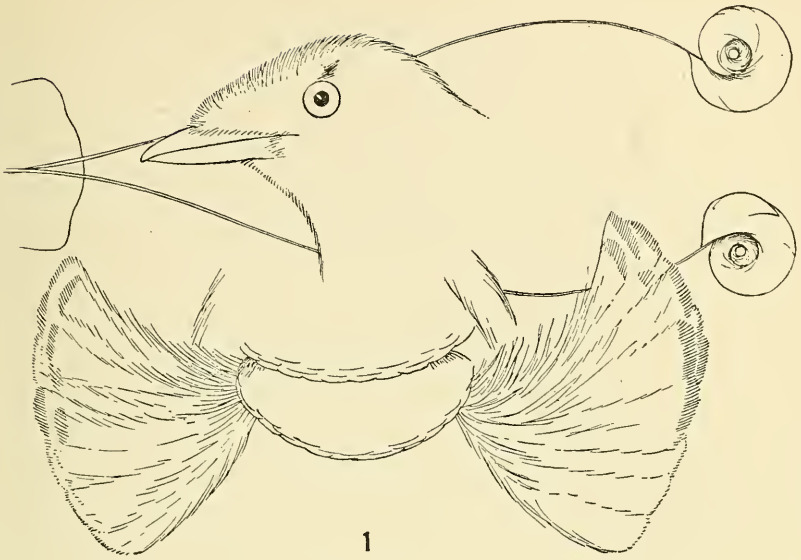
regius from Jobi Island under the subspecific name *coccineifrons*. This form is said to differ from true *regius* "in having the short feathers on the bill produced farther towards the tip, thus leaving a smaller piece of the bill unfeathered; in having these feathers a little longer, much darker, and of the same colour as the back." There are about thirty specimens of *regius* in the National Museum; all of these, however, seem to be typical, consequently I have had no opportunity of examining the subspecies.

The figures of the old pre-Linnean authors, though very poor, undoubtedly refer to *C. regius*.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE XVII.

Fig. 1. Pectoral shield, head, and tail of *Cicinnurus regius*.

2. Pectoral shield, head, and tail of *Cicinnurus lyogyrus*



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FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE PAGE 499.

