Notes on the Birds of the Loo-choo Islands.

Phasianus mognolicus.

The Pheasant which bears this name appears to range from the lower valley of the Syr-Darya, across the basin of Lake Balkash, as far east as Lake Saissan and the valley of the Black Irtish. I can find no evidence of the occurrence in any part of Mongolia of thoroughbred examples of this Pheasant.

In some respects it is intermediate between *P. chrysomelas* and *P. torquatus*, resembling the latter in having a ring round the neck (though it does not quite meet in front), and in having a great deal of green on its rump and upper tail-coverts. It can scarcely be regarded as a cross between the two, as in the colour of its mantle and wing-coverts, and in the pattern of its tail, it agrees with the former, and shows no inclination to approach the latter.

There can be little doubt, however, that it interbreeds both with *P. chrysomelas* and *P. shawi*. The outlying colony in the basin of Lake Ebi shows so much strain of *P. shawi* that Severtzow described it as a new species under the name of *P. semitorquatus*. Examples with traces of a white ring are very common in collections of *P. chrysomelas*, and far from uncommon in series of *P. shawi*.

XVIII.—Notes on the Birds of the Loo-choo Islands.

By Henry Seebohm.

(Plate VII.)

The Loo-choo, Liu-kiu, or Ryu-kyu Islands lie between Japan and Formosa, and enjoy a climate of remarkable equability. The summer is not too hot to permit the growth of wheat, and the winter is not too cold for the cultivation of sugar-cane and pine-apples. From an ornithological point of view these islands are said to rival Heligoland as a station where migration may be seen on an extended scale.

By the kind assistance of Mr. H. Pryer, to whom we are indebted for much valuable information respecting the birds of Japan, I am enabled to produce a preliminary list—not of the migrants which pass the Loo-Choo Islands in such count-
less numbers, but of the resident birds, amongst which appear to be two new to science. These islands were visited in February and March by Mr. Namiye. In May and June Mr. Pryer was there himself, and his collector remained until the end of August.

The following list of birds obtained on these islands has been furnished me by Mr. Pryer; those specimens which have passed through my hands are specially mentioned.

1. Scops semitorques.
2. Ninox japonicus.
3. Fringilla spinus.
4. Passer montanus.
   Mr. Pryer has sent a skin, which appears to me to be that of the Tree Sparrow, a bird of the year; but the Loo-choo bird has been described as distinct under the name of Passer saturatus (Steeneger, Pr. U.S. Nat. Mus. viii. p. 19).
5. Emberiza personata.
   Mr. Pryer says this was the only species of Bunting seen on these islands.
7. Merula pallida.
   Mr. Pryer remarks that an example of the Red-eared Bulbul from the Loo-choo Islands agrees with those from Ogasawara, or Bonin Island, in being darker than Japanese birds. The Bonin-Island bird is certainly larger, as the following measurements will prove:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ningpo</th>
<th>Yokohama</th>
<th>Bonin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wing</td>
<td>5·0</td>
<td>4·7</td>
<td>5·3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tail</td>
<td>4·6</td>
<td>4·4</td>
<td>4·8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culmen</td>
<td>1·2</td>
<td>1·1</td>
<td>1·4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarsus</td>
<td>0·85</td>
<td>0·9</td>
<td>0·95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Monticola solitaria.
11. Tarsiger cyanurus.
12. Erithacus komadori.

Mr. Pryer, or, to be strictly accurate, his friend Mr. Namiy, has solved the mystery of the so-called 'Corean Robin.' It appears that, after all, this bird, as remarkable for the gaiety of its plumage as for the melody of its song, does not come from the Corea. In Japan it is only known as a very expensive cage-bird, but about twenty miles from the town of Shiuri, on the largest of the Loo-choo Islands, and on the island of Amami, Oho-Shima, it is a common species. As Mr. Jouy saw no trace of this bird during his three years' residence in the Corea, it should for the future be called the Loo-choo Robin.

13. Cisticola brunneiceps.

The skin of a Fantail Warbler from Loo-choo, dated 2nd June, differs from any that I have seen before. This is an extreme form of the eastern or tropical race, which may possibly have a right to the name Cisticola schænicola brunneiceps. In breeding-plumage, examples from South Africa, the plains of India, Ceylon, Japan, and Formosa approach very near it, but it differs from European examples in the colour of the tail. The black subterminal band is separated from the black basal half by brownish buff on both webs of the two central tail-feathers and on the outer webs of the rest, and by chestnut-buff on the inner webs of the latter. This chestnut or buff band across the tail is considerably more than half an inch wide: it is absent in winter plumage, but examples showing more or less of it are found in breeding birds in all the tropical countries where it is found, but never in the colder portions of its range. Under these circumstances it must be regarded as subspecifically distinct from C. schænicola.

In this case the Loo-choo species is decidedly not Malayan in character. C. exilis has no trace whatever of the buff band across the tail. Its range extends northwards from Australia and many of the islands of the Malay archipelago to the Malay peninsula and the Philippines, inosculating with that of its more western ally in Burma, Assam, and Formosa.
15. Parus ater.
17. Parus varius.
18. Ampelis phoenicoptera.
19. Pericrocotus cantonensis?
Mr. Pryer remarks that he obtained on the islands a *Pericrocotus* smaller and darker than *P. cinereus*; but as he has not sent a skin, the determination of the species must for the present remain doubtful.

20. Corvus japonensis?
Mr. Pryer says that this Crow resembles the Carrion Crow, but adds, "beak much larger than ordinary, but short in the primaries." He describes it as not at all common on the islands.

21. Hirundo javanica?
Mr. Namiye obtained an example of a "small and dark" Swallow, which may possibly prove to belong to this species, which has occurred in the Philippine Islands. Mr. Pryer says that it is not found in Japan, but has not sent a skin.

22. Zosterops japonica.
Mr. Pryer says that, "next to the Sparrow, this is the commonest bird found on the island."

The Ruddy Kingfisher must be regarded as a decidedly Malay element in the fauna of the Loo-choo Islands. It has found its way up through Burma to the Himalayas, and through the Philippine Islands to Formosa and Japan, but is not known to have occurred in China.

An example sent by Mr. Pryer agrees in every respect with examples of the small eastern race of the Common Kingfisher from China and Japan.
25. **Iyngipicus kizuki nigrescens**, subsp. n.

The Woodpeckers are specially interesting because so many of them vary in colour and size in different areas of their distribution, the variation being certainly coincident with, and probably caused by, difference of climate. The extreme of climatic variation is doubtless reached in our two British species of Spotted Woodpecker, *Picus major* and *P. minor*, but it is also very marked in the more typical genus *Iyngipicus*. *I. pygmaeus* is a resident in the Himalayas. In Formosa and Hainan it is represented by a slightly larger bird, with more white on the plumage, *I. pygmaeus kaleensis*. In China it has increased in whiteness and slightly in size, and becomes *I. pygmaeus scintilliceps*; and in South-eastern Siberia the maximum both of size and whiteness is reached in *I. pygmaeus doerriesi*. It is difficult to say which error ought to be more carefully avoided—the exaggeration of the differences, so as to make these climatic races into distinct species, or the depreciation of them to the extent of confusing the climatic races together as one species.

The Japanese species of *Iyngipicus* appears to have become differentiated completely from *I. pygmaeus* and its conspecific forms. It agrees with that species in having black upper tail-coverts and central tail-feathers, but it differs from it in having the white superciliary stripe separated from the white sides of the neck. It is, however, itself subject to climatic influence, and may be subdivided into at least three climatic races. *Iyngipicus kizuki* was originally described from Kyu-lyu, the most southern of the three Japanese islands. It is a small bird, with a brown head and not very much white on the upper parts; for example, the outer webs of the three longest primaries have five small white spots on each. In the Central and North Island it is represented by a larger bird, with a grey head and much more white on the upper parts; for example, the white spots on the outer webs of the three longest primaries are larger and are six in number. It is difficult to regard *I. kizuki seebohmi* as more than subspecifically distinct from its nearest ally, especially as the South-east Siberian form of this species is a still larger
Mr. H. Seebohm on the

bird. I am now, thanks to Mr. Pryer's kindness, confirmed in this opinion by the sight of the opposite extreme of the climatic races of this species. An example from Naha, one of the Loo-choo Islands, is smaller and darker than any which I have seen from Japan; the head is nearly black, and there are only four very small white spots on the outer webs of each of the three longest primaries. I propose to call it I. nigrescens, or, if its full title be given, I. kizuki nigrescens. There can be little doubt that in a large series from both localities some examples would be absolutely indistinguishable. In a series of sixteen examples in Mr. Hargitt's collection and my own, those from the North Island of Japan are indistinguishable from those from the Middle Island, whilst those from the Southern Island are conspicuously darker. On the other hand, Dr. Stejneger (Pr. U.S. Nat. Mus. 1886, p. 121) regards a series, apparently of nine skins, from the Middle and Southern Islands as practically the same, while those from the North Island are treated as specifically distinct. It is, of course, possible that Dr. Stejneger is right, and that all our skins from the Middle Island are those of winter migrants from Yesso.

26. Picus noguchii, sp. n. (Plate VII.)

This entirely new species, which I have named according to Mr. Pryer's instructions, is unquestionably the most interesting bird in the collection. It is a young bird which has partly completed its moult into the plumage of the adult.

The general colour of the upper parts is black, each feather on the forehead, crown, and nape tipped with crimson. All the small feathers of the upper parts, except the wing-coverts, are obscurely tipped with dull crimson. There is a white spot on each web of all the quills at the base, and, in addition, a white spot on the outer web of the third to the sixth primaries, and two white spots on the inner webs of the third to the eighth primaries. The tail is uniform black. The sides of the head, the chin, and the throat are brown, shading into nearly black on the breast and the rest of the underparts. The old feathers on the underparts below the throat are tipped with orange-crimson, but the new feathers
PICUS NOGUCHII.
appear to be a rich maroon-colour. Length of wing 5·7 inches, tail 3·8, culmen 1·25, tarsus 1·2, hind toes (without claw) 0·9 and 0·4, fore toes 0·75 and 0·6.

In the shape and pale colour of its bill, and in the smallness of its nasal bristles, this species resembles *Venilia, Xylolepes*, and some other of the pseudo-genera of Woodpeckers, and will probably be included in the genus which will absorb them when the genera of Woodpeckers are intelligently studied.

27. *Carpophaga ianthina*.

Mr. Pryer remarks that one of the specimens has a large white patch between the shoulders.

28. *Treron sieboldi*.

29. *Turtur orientalis*.

An example sent by Mr. Pryer from the Loo-choo Islands agrees with others from China and Japan. This species is a summer visitor to South-eastern Siberia and the North Island of Japan, wintering in South China and Formosa. In the other Japanese islands it is a resident; and as the skin sent from the Loo-choo Islands is dated 31st May, the species probably remains the whole year in that locality. It has not occurred on the Philippine Islands, but its range extends to Burma and Cochin China.

30. *Turnix ocellata*.

A skin of a "Bustard Quail," as Indian sportsmen call it, is undoubtedly the Indo-Malayan Hemipode. This is another instance of the Malayan affinities of the fauna of the Loo-choo Islands. None of the mainland Chinese Hemipodes have black throats, and no Hemipode is found in Japan. Compared with *T. plumbipes* in the Hume collection from Salangore, in the Malay peninsula, the Loo-choo bird is a shade redder in the upper parts, and a trifle less so on the underparts.

The specimen sent is not sexed, but, having a black throat, it is presumably a female. Swinhoe states (P. Z. S. 1871, p. 401) that the female of his *T. rostrata* has a black throat in summer; but there are no skins dating between March
and December in his collection. Unfortunately the Tweeddale collection is at present inaccessible, but it seems probable that when the necessary material falls into the hands of a competent ornithologist, a great slaughter of species must take place. So far as I have been able to ascertain from the limited material at my disposal, it appears that the Indo-Malayan Hemipode was originally described by Scopoli in 1786, from an example figured by Sonnerat, obtained in the island of Luzon, where it was afterwards found by Mr. Everett, Lord Tweeddale's collector in the Philippine Islands. Scopoli, with the fatal genius for blundering so often found in compilers, assumed that Sonnerat did not know a Quail from an Oriole, and named the species *Oriolus ocellatus*. In 1823 Temminck rediscovered the species in a collection from Java, and named it *Hemipodius puynax*. In India and Burma it has been described over and over again: in 1832 by Sykes as *Hemipodius taigoor*; in 1837 by Hodgson as *Hemipodius plumbipes*; and afterwards by Blyth, Eyton, and others under various names. In 1865 Swinhoe described it from Formosa as *Turnix rostrata*, and a further search will doubtless swell the list of synonyms considerably more—though it is possible that one or two of the names may be retained in a trinomial capacity, to indicate climatic races.

31. *Fulica atra.*

32. *Gallinula chloropus.*

33. *Charadrius fulvus.*

The Eastern Golden Plover is probably only seen in spring and autumn on migration.

34. *Totanus brevipes.*

The example sent belongs to the Asiatic, and not to the American form of this species. The tarsus is scutellated at the back; the nasal groove extends for only half the length of the bill, and the belly is unspotted white. It is, of course, only seen on the Loo-choo Islands on migration.

35. *Ardea sacra.*

An example of a Reef Heron sent by Mr. Pryer does
not differ from two skins from the Straits of Corea (Ibis, 1884, p. 176), and agrees with the description of the two Reef Herons from Japan in the Leyden Museum (Mus. Pays-Bas, Ardea, p. 28), except that in the dried skins the legs are slate-grey. It is remarkable that this bird is not recorded from any part of the Chinese coast, and only once from the Philippines (Lord Tweeddale, P. Z. S. 1877, p. 551). The white form of this species is not known to have occurred north of the Molucca Islands.

36. Nycticorax nycticorax.

37. Sterna melanauchen.

The Black-naped Tern was found breeding on the coast of China near Amoy by Swinhoe, but an example sent by Pryer from the Loo-choo Islands extends its known range further north.

38. Sterna sinensis.

The White-shafted Ternlet, of which Mr. Pryer has sent home a skin, is said by him to be common on the Loo-choo Islands, arriving in spring and leaving in autumn. Swinhoe found it breeding on Formosa; but the Abbé David says that he observed it as far north as Mongolia, and it was probably this species which Radde found on the Amoor and mistook for Sterna minuta. I have already recorded it from Japan (Ibis, 1884, p. 32).

39. Sterna dougalli.

Mr. Pryer has sent an adult example in breeding-plumage of the Roseate Tern, a species which has not previously been recorded from the North Pacific. As this bird is not known to have occurred in China or the Philippine Islands, it may be regarded as, to a certain extent, a Malay element in the Loo-choo fauna. Mr. Saunders identified the specimen.

40. Dendrocygna javanica.

Mr. Pryer has sent two examples of the Lesser Whistling Teal, which his collector shot in a paddy-field, and said that the birds were abundant. This common Indian species is found throughout the Malay peninsula, and is also recorded
Mr. W. C. Tait on the Birds of Portugal.

from Sumatra, Java, and Borneo, but is not known in China. Mr. Pryer remarks that the insect fauna of the Loo-choo Islands is "almost entirely Malayan," so that we need scarcely try to account for the existence of this Duck by suggesting that it may have been introduced.

Now that the Loo-choo Islands have been proved to possess so many points of ornithological interest, it is to be hoped that they will be speedily explored. Dr. Guillemard, in his cruise of the 'Marchesa,' has drawn attention to the extreme good nature of the inhabitants, but he was not very successful in his ornithological researches on the islands. In the 'Proceedings of the Academy of Philadelphia,' 1862, p. 312, there is a list of twelve species of birds collected on the Loo-choo Islands in 1854 by the exploring expedition under Capt. Rodgers. Six of these have been obtained by Mr. Pryer. Four others are evidently migrants, namely:—

41. Ardea alba.
42. Numenius arquatus.
43. Totanus hypoleucus.
44. Fuligula marila.

Of the two remaining species obtained by Capt. Rogers,
45. Ardea grayi
may possibly be a resident, and
46. Columba intermedia
a more or less domesticated Pigeon, introduced in prehistoric times.

XIX.—A List of the Birds of Portugal.
By William C. Tait, Oporto.
[Continued from p. 96.]

This species was differentiated by Messrs. Sharpe and Dresser