

coracoid bones, which I am inclined to regard as the most characteristic in, as they are the most peculiar to, the ornithic skeleton, are plainly framed on the true Gallinaceous model. The furculum is very different from that of any other group of birds which I happen to remember, and bears no resemblance to the same bone in the *Phasianidæ* or *Tetraonidæ*. Still less, however, does it indicate any approximation to the same part in the *Grallæ*, or I may say of the *Columbidæ*, with both of which groups the Sand-Grouse have been supposed to have affinity. From the peculiarities, therefore, of the sternal apparatus I am fully of opinion that Bonaparte, and those authors who have followed him, are quite right in elevating the Sand-Grouse to the dignity of a family (*Pteroclidæ*), though I imagine they were chiefly led to that conclusion by an examination of the external characters only.

I should have felt it incumbent upon me to have made some remarks on the information possessed by naturalists respecting this rare and curious bird; but almost all that can be said on the subject has recently been admirably recapitulated in a paper by my friend Mr. T. J. Moore in 'The Ibis' for last year\*. I would, however, observe that though the illustrious Pallas has the credit of first giving a *description* of this bird, he does not appear to have seen more than a single example of it, which was obtained in the Kirghis steppes by Nicolas Rytschkof, and mentioned by him in his Journal †. And of this example, judging from the figure given of it, not only, as Pallas himself says "*Cauda in specimine deerat,*" but it also appears to have lost the elongated portion of the shafts of the outer remiges, which form so singular a feature in the species, and which, as we see by the state of the birds in our Gardens, are no doubt easily broken off. I must be allowed to add that I think this circumstance greatly favours the supposition that the specimens which were obtained in Western Europe in July and August 1859, were not indebted to any human interference for their transport; for I have had the good fortune to examine all four of them, and each possessed these extraordinary appendages in nearly perfect preservation.

5. ON A NEW SPECIES OF WATER-TORTOISE (*GEOCLEMMYS MELANOSTERNA*) FROM DARIEN. BY DR. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S., V.P.Z.S., ETC.

The British Museum has just received a very distinct species of the more terrestrial kind of Terrapins, or Freshwater Tortoises, from Cherunha in the Gulf of Darien.

It is easily known from the other described species by the black colour of the upper and lower surface, and pale-yellowish sides, and

\* The Ibis, 1860, p. 105.

† 'Kirgis-kaisazkoi Stepie, &c. St. Petersburg, 1772, p. 40.' I have not been able to see this work, and only quote the reference at second hand.—A. N.

the distinct bright-yellow superciliary streak on each side of the head, extending from the nostril to the occiput.

GEOCLEMMYS MELANOSTERNA.

Shell black, one-keeled; the first vertebral plate longer than broad, truncated behind; second and third six-sided, about as broad as long, the fourth broader than long; the keel low, rather interrupted; the areola of the dorsal and marginal shield posterior; the margin rather acute, slightly bent up in front and on the sides; the nuchal shield more distinct; the sternum flat, black, with rather paler edges to the shields; the sterno-costal slope rather convex, pale yellowish; the under surface of the marginal plates pale; the axillary plate moderate, the inguinal plate small, both pale-coloured. The head moderate, rather acute in front, black, with a distinct bright-yellow streak diverging over the eyes and extending from the nostril to the back of the head. The legs and tail brown with black spots, forming more or less distinct streaks; toes 5·4, short, strong, subequal, covered with distinct band-like scales; the claws strong, conical, black.

*Hab.* The Gulf of Darien: Cherunha.

6. DESCRIPTIONS OF NEW SHELLS FROM THE COLLECTION OF  
H. CUMING, ESQ. BY DR. H. DOHRN.

(Plate XXVI.)

1. EPIDROMUS CUMINGI. (Pl. XXVI. fig. 5.)

*T. ovato-turrita, costis spiralibus et longitudinalibus fenestrata, alba, passim flavo-maculata; varicibus arcuatis, longitudinaliter striatis, transverse costatis; sutura valde impressa; anfr. 8-9, valde convexi, lente accrescentes, ultimus antice ascendens; apertura ovata; margine columellari callo lato granulato tecto, labro dentato.*

Long. 31, lat. 12; ap. long. 12 mill.

*Hab.* In Insulis Philippinis.

Differt ab *E. clathrato*, Sow., costis eorumque nodis validioribus, varicibus arcuatis, anfractibus convexioribus.

2. MITRA AURORA. (Pl. XXVI. fig. 3.)

*T. ovato-fusiformis, nitida, spiraliter punctato-striata, aurantiaca, ad suturam fascia alba irregulari cincta, maculis et punctis albis adspersa; sutura crenata, marginata; spira acuminata; anfr. 8, plani, ultimus basi attenuatus et sulcatus; apertura fere verticalis, intus cærulescenti-albida; labrum crenatum, columella callo 5-plicato tecta.*

Long. 35, lat. 13; ap. long. 18, lat. 6½ mill.

*Hab.* In insulis Sandwich.

Accedit ad varietates quasdam *M. coronatæ*, Lam.

3. MITRA ADAMSI.

*T. solida, ovata, longitudinaliter costellata, costis albidis, interstitiis*