

by the natives. The eggs are deposited by the birds in the sand about the borders of a large lake of brackish water situated in the middle of the island (evidently an extinct crater, as the soil in which the eggs are deposited consists of sulphureous sand), and are hatched by the heat generated in the mound, as in all the *Megapodidæ*. In Nua Fou Island the birds and eggs are, I am informed, under the protection of the king, and can only be procured by his permission. I have seen the same kind of eggs from the New Hebrides group. Captain McLeod has promised, on his return to the island in a few weeks, to procure me some of the birds alive or dead, when I shall be able to send you more accurate accounts."

The following papers were read :—

1. ON A NEW SPECIES OF MALACOPTILA FROM WESTERN ECUADOR. BY P. L. SCLATER, M.A., PHIL.D., F.R.S., SECRETARY TO THE SOCIETY.

(Plate VIII.)

A re-examination of my specimens of birds of the family *Bucconidæ* induces me to believe that I have confounded under the name *Malacoptila panamensis* (Lafr.), which I assigned to a series of examples of this genus collected at Esmeraldas by Mr. Fraser, two species. One of them may probably be the true *M. panamensis* of Lafresnaye, though this must remain rather uncertain until the original of Lafresnaye's description shall have been accurately compared with it; the other I propose to call

MALACOPTILA POLIOPIS, sp. nov. (Pl. VIII.)

Cinerascenti-fusca, dorso toto et alarum tectricibus maculis triangularibus albidis distincte notatis; pileo et facie cinereis; fronte loris et plumis mystacalibus pure albis, his cinereo partim mixtis; laterum cervicis plumarum scapis elongate albido lineolatis: subtus alba, pectore toto pallide fulvo; ventre summo et lateribus cinerascenti-brunneo variegatis: rectricibus et remigibus clare nigricanti-brunneis; caudæ, ipsa immaculata, apice pallidiore, fulvescente: rostro plumbeo, mand. inf. in uno specimine ad basin flavida: pedibus fusco-nigris: tectr. subalaribus pallide fulvis.

Long. tota 7·0; alæ 3·5; caudæ 2·8; rostri a rictu 1·4 poll. Angl. et dec.

Hab. in reg. litt. reipublicæ Æquatorialis, Esmeraldas (*Fraser*).

Mr. Fraser procured two examples of this species when at Esmeraldas; and, as they are both marked females, I was induced to believe they might be referable to that sex of *M. panamensis* of which (or of a species which I have referred to this name) he procured several examples. I am now convinced that these two examples cannot be referred to *M. panamensis*, that species being wholly of a rich reddish brown above, and having a deep ferruginous chest and a much larger amount of white on the frontal plumes. This bird is,

in fact, more like *Mal. inornata* of the Vera Paz, from which, however, it appears likewise distinguishable on comparison, the latter having a rufescent tail, the breast of a less decided fulvous, and the fulvous colour more equably distributed over the lower surface.

2. DESCRIPTIONS OF BUTTERFLIES FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF
A. R. WALLACE AND W. C. HEWITSON. BY W. C. HEWITSON.

(Plates IX., X.)

NYPHALIDÆ.

MYNES LEUCIS, Boisduval. (Pl. IX.)

This species was first described by Dr. Boisduval, in the 'Voyage of the Astrolabe,' under the name it bears above. It was also described by Guérin Méneville, in the 'Voyage of the Coquille,' under the same name, but is figured in the plates which accompany the work as *Nymphalis australis*. The figure there given is a very good one; but as it only represents the upper side, I have thought that a figure of its remarkable under side, together with some of the strange varieties into which it runs, from the rich collection of Mr. Wallace, may be of interest to those who make the Lepidoptera their study.

Greatly as the varieties of this insect differ above, they bear a much closer resemblance to each other on the under side, and do not wander very far from the accompanying figure.

The examples figured in the plate are all females. A male in my own collection, from Mysol, is entirely black, with the exception of the central spot of the posterior wing. I have described below all the varieties which I have with me, for the whole of which we are indebted to Mr. Wallace. They were all collected in the New Guinea group of islands. I have indicated each variety by a separate letter, following the good example of Dr. Boisduval in his 'Spécies Général,' not being myself able to see that any good whatever can arise from the modern custom of giving names to varieties and thus elevating them to the same importance as the typical species, from which they are sometimes scarcely to be known. On the contrary, I believe that it will produce great and endless confusion.

Var. A. ♂. Anterior wing black, spotless. Posterior wing black, with a large central bifid white spot, and two smaller spots between it and the inner margin bordered with grey.

Hab. Mysol.

Var. B. ♀ (Pl. IX. fig. 1). Anterior wing black, with a spot near the middle of the costal margin, two spots beyond the middle of the wing, and a submarginal band of eight spots all white. Posterior wing with the central spot quinquefid.

Hab. Dorey.

Var. C (Voyage Coquille, pl. 14 *bis*). Anterior wing black, with a small spot near the middle of the costal margin, followed by *two*