

ART. XXX.—*Notes on some Additions to the Collection of Birds in the Colonial Museum.* By T. W. KIRK, Assistant in the Colonial Museum.

[Read before the Wellington Philosophical Society, 11th February, 1881.]

By permission of Dr. Hector, I have the pleasure of bringing before the notice of the Society several interesting birds lately received at the Museum.

1. *Porphyrio melanotus*.—Pukeko.

Porphyrio melanotus, Temm.

Several examples of abnormal colouring in this species have been recorded, but no instance of a pure albino has yet been noticed, unless we accept Dr. Buller's suggestion that *Porphyrio stanleyi*, described in Rowley's "Ornithological Miscellany," Vol. I., p. 37, is merely an albino of *P. melanotus*. It is, therefore, with great pleasure that I now draw your attention to an undoubted albino, obtained at Lake Grassmere by Mr. Liardet.

Description.:—The whole of the plumage is quite white; the frontal plate is small, and nearly square; total length, 19 inches; wing, from flexure, 10·5; tail, 4·4; frontal plate, across the top, ·5; from posterior edge of frontal plate to tip of superior mandible, 2·75; along the edge of inferior mandible, 1·6; bare portion of tibia, 1·2; tarsus, 3·5; middle toe, 3·5, and claw, ·5; inner toe, 2·3, and claw, ·6; outer toe, 2·9, and claw, ·5; hind toe, 1·2, and claw, ·5.

The bird is somewhat small, but, as will be seen, agrees in the proportion of its measurements with the common "swamp hen," and may perhaps afford *slight* evidence in support of the specific distinction of *P. stanleyi*, the wing of which is shorter, and the legs and feet apparently stouter than in the specimen under consideration.

2. *Anas chlorotis*.—Brown duck.

In a paper read before this Society in 1878, Dr. Buller mentioned that an albino specimen of the common "brown duck" was shot on the Horowhenua lake, the whole plumage being of a dull cream colour, with obsolete markings. The specimen now before you is a partial albino, shot at the Wairarapa lake in April last.

Face and a band across the forehead white with numerous brown spots; back and abdomen irregularly marked with grey and white feathers; wings white with irregular black patches, the coverts being of the usual colour but with many of the feathers either entirely white or deeply margined with the same; bill and feet bluish black.

3. In passing through Featherston in May last, I observed a man carrying several ducks, one of which immediately attracted my attention, both by

its large size and the peculiarity of its plumage. The possessor would not part with his prize, but willingly allowed me to examine and measure it.

In general appearance it resembled the specimen described by Dr. Buller* as a variety of the common grey duck (*Anas superciliosa*).

There was a broad band of white across the breast; the wings were quite white, the coverts being of the usual grey, but with a few white feathers interspersed; the head and face were white as far as the posterior margin of the eye, remainder of head dark brown with green reflections; bill black; feet and legs yellow; total length, 28.5 inches; wing from flexure, 11 inches; tarsus, 2.2; middle toe, 2.7.

Is it possible that this bird can have been the result of hybridization, say of the paradise and the grey duck, or the former and the domestic variety!

ART. XXXI.—Notice of *New Crustaceans*.

By T. W. KIRK, Assistant in the Colonial Museum.

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Halimus rubiginosus.

THE Colonial Museum has for some years past possessed a specimen of *Halimus* bearing the name "*Halimus rubiginosus*, Hutton, MS." In 1877 Dr. Hector submitted a drawing of this specimen to Mr. Miers of the British Museum, who replied, "It is evidently closely allied to *H. hectori*, Miers, the tubercles occupying the same positions, but being in some places replaced by spines, also the rostral spines are longer and more acute; these differences may be due to age or sex." Having had the opportunity of examining a series of seven specimens, both male and female, I feel convinced that the differences are not "due to age or sex," and therefore have but little hesitation in distinguishing it from *H. hectori*, Miers, and adopting the name so long ago applied.

Description:—Rostral spines long, acute and depressed. Anterior legs moderate, armed with acute spines, hand smooth. A single row of very stout hairs arranged alternately, one long and one short, along both margins of the second and third pairs of legs. A few scattered hairs of the same character on the fourth and fifth pairs of legs.

Hab. Cape Campbell, Wellington, Napier.

Gelasimus thomsoni.—Fighting Crab.

Two males and one female of this singular and pugnacious-looking crab, were brought to me some time ago by one of the local fishermen.

* See "Trans. N.Z. Inst.," Vol. VII., p. 225.