

slightly alarmed the bird would raise the wing farthest from the intruder, but when "cornered", both wings would be extended and brought forward until they reached beyond the tip of the beak, and the tail spread, so that the beautiful spotted markings were fully shown. The hissing, as described by Finn, was very noticeable in the older bird, but in the younger one it was replaced by a low plaintive whistle, so it possibly only occurs with the more fully developed birds.

The "Painter" is reported as breeding two or three times during the season, and it is likely that the breeding season in Bangkok extends over the greater part of the rains. The nest is the usual hollow, often with a pad of grass, and the eggs are four in number, slightly pyriform in shape, yellowish stone colour with large markings of very dark brown or black. The eggs measure 1.4 by 1 inches. Should anyone be so fortunate as to come across a sitting bird, it would be interesting to note whether it is a male or female, as the male is the inferior bird and there is reason to believe that it sits on the nest.

E. G. HERBERT.

October, 1913.

No. VI. BREEDING OF PAINTED SNIPE IN SIAM.

The point as to whether the Painted Snipe breeds around Bangkok has been discussed and doubted so often that it will interest sportsmen and naturalists, I feel sure, to know that while shooting this season at Sala Yah, I came across a mother with four chicks. This was on September 22nd. My man caught one of the chicks. It was quite small and unable to fly, being covered only with down, and had therefore obviously been hatched out only a few days. I did not keep the chick or make any special note of its coloration, but the parent bird, which I saw at quite close quarters, was clearly a "Painter."

C. H. FORTY.

November, 1913.

No. VII.—THE MOULTING OF SNIPE.

I noticed this season that the "Pintails," or, at any rate, the early arrivals, were already in moult when they reached Bangkok. In the case of four of the first birds shot (Sept. 14th), one had completed the moult of the primaries but the new feathers were not quite fully developed; the second had only the two outer primaries of the old feathers remaining and the new ones were in varying states of development; the third had lost six of the old primaries, and the fourth bird had only lost four. In the latter two instances the new

feathers were little more than stumps. It is true this was an exceptionally late season in starting, and may have had something to do with the particular stage of moult in which the birds arrived, but that rather adds to the interest of the subject than otherwise.

The moult of the primaries appeared to start from about the centre of the wing, usually about the 7th and 8th, followed by the next outer pair and then an inner pair, so by the time the outer pair of primaries were dropped the new centre feathers had put on a fair amount of growth. This was about the weakest stage of the moult, when only the outer pair of old primaries remain.

Another noticeable feature of the moult was the dropping of the "pin" feathers from the tail, which occurred about a month later.

E. G. HERBERT.

November, 1913.

No. VIII.—DISTRIBUTION OF THE INDIAN PIED KINGFISHER
(*CERYLE VARIA*) AND SPOTTED OWLET
(*ATHENE BRAMA*) IN SIAM.

I have been endeavouring to trace recently the southern limit of the Indian Pied Kingfisher (*Ceryle varia*. F. 1033) and should be glad if your readers would help me. This bird abounds on the Me Ping and Me Yome, and rivers further North, and is very plentiful on the Menam above and below Bangkok, but is unknown in the Malay States. It is common in India, Ceylon, and Burma in the plains, except south of Amherst, and it extends east into China, but apparently does not go much south of Bangkok. It should not be difficult to trace, as it is a noisy bird and can be readily recognised by its peculiar fishing habits. Unlike other Kingfishers it never plunges from a fixed perch, but flies over the water and hovers with its beak pointed downwards, at a height of frequently 15 or 20 feet above the surface, when it suspects the presence of a fish. It dives for its prey after hovering, hence the Siamese name "Nok kra ten *pak lak*," which likens the long straight plunge to the driving of a stake.

Another species which occurs in Siam, though as far as I am aware it has not previously been recorded, is the Spotted Owlet (*Athene brama*. F. 1180). It is quite common some 40 miles north of Bangkok, but I believe it does not occur in Bangkok or further south in Siam—the exact distribution of it is therefore of interest.

Blanford gives it as occurring throughout India, but not in Ceylon, and as common in the Irrawaddy valley from Prome upwards, the latitude of Prome being about 18°. The latitude at which it is found in Siam is known to be as far south as 14°.

The Spotted Owlet is a noisy little bird (8" long) which comes out before sunset and pours forth a volley of chuckles and squeaks. Usually two of these individuals sit shouting together, as if trying which can finish its chatter first. The entire upper plumage is an ashy brown copiously spotted with white, and the tail is barred with