

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES.

No. I.—The Burmese House-Crow (*Corvus splendens insolens*) at Petchaburi.

A recent note by Mr. W. J. F. Williamson in this Journal (*antea*, p. 105), mentioned the reported occurrence of the Burmese House-Crow in Ratburi and Petchaburi. This was the testimony of various Siamese, who knew the bird as *I-kae* (ไอ กะ) from its call, which differs from the call of the Jungle-Crow (*Corvus coronoides andamanensis*). Its size is also somewhat less and the neck slightly grayish, but the call is by far the chief distinction. Those who knew it concurred that it was rare and shy.

After several attempts I have just succeeded in getting a specimen at Wat Phra Taht, Petchaburi, but it cost a number of cartridges, and in the end my collector gave up after obtaining this one, saying the birds were all too shy and he could not find others, though I had asked for three, to get both sexes. The last he shot fell in the Wat (Temple) grounds, and undoubtedly was picked up, though all denied it. For it seems that the bird is esteemed as medicine (probably on account of the difficulty of procuring it), and it is not unlikely that some of the very priests who denied seeing it, had told one of their boys to gather it up, too rare and good a chance to lose. It is kept till high, then pickled in spirits, or else split whole and roasted over the fire, and thus makes *Ya-mu* (ยา หมู), a medicine which is valuable (?) for *Sang* (ซาง), a term which may include almost any unidentified wasting child's disease.

The measurements of the bird (a female, not nesting, possibly a just-adult nestling of this year, as there are a few pin feathers on the neck, and one of the wing primaries on either side is also undeveloped) are as follows:—Total length 14.5 inches, tail 5.5, bill 1.5, spread of wings 24, tarsus 1.5—as against those of the Jungle-Crow (*Corvus c. andamanensis*):—Total length 20 inches, tail 7, bill 2.5, spread 29 and tarsus 2.5. The color is black, except the slightly gray neck.

The place of nesting I have not ascertained, though the bird is said to occur in Petchaburi in varying numbers throughout the year.

LUCIUS C. BULKLEY, M.D.

Petchaburi, 25th August, 1921.

[Dr. Bulkley's measurements indicate a small bird, not full grown. If the breeding season in Siam is the same as in Burma (middle of March to beginning of rains—*vide* Faun. Brit. India, Birds, i, p. 22), an example shot in August might very well be sub-adult.

Dr. Bulkley went on leave, immediately after writing this note, and we understand that he took the specimen with him, for presentation to one of the American Museums.

It may be added that Mr. Williamson sent his collector to Petchaburi in October (two months after Dr. Bulkley obtained his bird), with express instructions to proceed to Wat Phra Taht, or elsewhere in the town, for the purpose of procuring specimens of this crow, but the man reports there were none to be seen.—EDS.]

No. II —The Giant Ibis (*Thaumatibis gigantea*) in Cambodia.

In December 1918 Dr. Malcolm Smith and I sent a couple of collectors to Koh Kong (Koh= island), and the adjacent Cambodian coast in about Lat 11° N., slightly below the point where the extreme south-east of Siam joins French Indo-Chinese territory.

The birds obtained on that trip have not yet been critically examined, but the fact should be recorded that, among them, is a pair of the still rare Ibis, *T. gigantea*, of which six specimens now appear to be known.

Oustalet's type came from Cochin-China [*Ibis gigantea*, Oust., Bull. Soc. Philom. (7) I, (1877), p. 25], while the next two examples were obtained in Trang, Peninsular Siam, by Dr. W. L. Abbott, and Messrs. Robinson and Kloss, respectively (Ibis, 1911, p. 17), and the fourth by Mr. K. G. Gairdner in the Circle of Ratburi, on the western side of central Siam [Journ. Nat. Hist. Soc. Siam. II (1916), p. 71]. The two now recorded are practically topo-types of Oustalet's bird, and are the first which have been secured otherwise than as isolated examples.

The collector who shot them reported, on his return, that he had seen at least one other specimen, so it is to be hoped that, at all events in some part of its habitat, the bird is not quite so rare as it has hitherto been believed to be.

♂, ♀. Kampong Sum Bon, near Sré Umbel, coast of Cambodia, 24 December, 1918.

Colours of soft parts (Native collector). Iris red, legs red.

Measurements. Total length (Native collector), ♂ 1065, ♀ 1020 mm. Other measurements (dried skin). Bill from gape, ♂ 223, ♀ 198. Wing, ♂ 554, ♀ 525. Tarsus, ♂ 113, ♀ 105 mm.

W. J. F. WILLIAMSON.

Bangkok, October, 1921.

No. III.—Earth Snake eating a Grass Snake.

An instance of the common Grass Snake (*Natrix piscator*) falling a victim to the apparently quiet and inoffensive Earth Snake (*Cylindrophis rufus*), came recently under my notice while out after snipe.