

White-fronted Pigeon now becomes *Homoptila brachyptera* (Salvad.).<sup>1</sup> The name *brachyptera* must of course date from Salvadori, 1893, the name being then for the first time properly established.

There is, however, among the alleged synonyms of *brachyptera* a still earlier name, to wit, *Leptoptila fulviventris* Lawrence, 1882, which Salvadori, after an examination of the type, places here. He remarks, however, "Some Yucatan specimens (*L. fulviventris* Lawr.) are more fulvous on the flanks, and, perhaps, less bright on the hind neck; generally they have the forehead more vinous, but some specimens from other localities match them in this respect." An examination of the type and several other Yucatan specimens labelled by Mr. Lawrence as *L. fulviventris*, in the collection of the American Museum of Natural History, however, seems to render their reference here extremely doubtful, they differing greatly from a large series of Texas and Mexican specimens of '*albifrons*,' apparently much more nearly agreeing with *Homoptila verreauxi* (Bon.), especially in the large amount of rufous on the inner web of the quills. It hence seems much safer to take the name *brachyptera* for the northern bird, usually heretofore known as *albifrons*. Probably a number of the forms in this genus ranked by Salvadori as species will eventually be found to be entitled to recognition merely as subspecies or geographical forms.—J. A. A.

**Elliot's Monograph of the Pittidæ.**<sup>2</sup>—'A Monograph of the Pittidæ,' published in 1863, was the first of the long series of finely illustrated monographs for which ornithologists are so deeply indebted to Mr. D. G. Elliot. In the interval of thirty years that has elapsed since its first appearance our knowledge of the group has greatly increased, many species in the meantime having been described, and the habits and relationships of the others have become better known. It is therefore peculiarly fitting that the group should be again monographed by the same hand. This "second edition, revised and enlarged," is practically a new work, not only much new matter being added, but the whole is rewritten, and the nomenclature much altered. The work is to form five parts, each part to contain ten plates; the new plates being drawn by Mr. W. Hart, while the old ones are by the author. The species figured in Part I are *Eucichla gurneyi*, *E. schwaneri*, *Pitta moluccensis*, *P. maxima*, *P. venusta*, *P.*

<sup>1</sup> *Peristera brachyptera* G. R. Gray, List Bds. Brit. Mus., Columbæ, 1856, p. 54 (*nomen nudum*).

*Leptoptila brachyptera* Salvad., Cat. Bds. Brit. Mus. XXI, 1893, p. 545.

*Homoptila brachyptera* Allen, MS.

*Leptoptila albifrons* Sclater (nec Bon.) P. Z. S., 1857, p. 214, and of most subsequent writers.

<sup>2</sup> A Monograph of the Pittidæ, or Family of Ant-Thrushes. By D. G. Elliot, F. R. S. E., etc. Second Edition, revised and enlarged. Part I, London: Bernard Quaritch, 15 Piccadilly, W. April, 1893. Folio, 10 colored Plates and text.

*rosenbergi*, *P. oatesi*, *P. angolensis*, *P. arcuata*, and *P. sordida*. One of these (*P. oatesi*) appears not to have been before figured, and three others are not included in the first edition of the 'Monograph.'

The changes in nomenclature that may be expected in the present as compared with the former edition have been foreshadowed in Mr. Elliot's recent article 'On the Genus *Pitta* Vieillot' (*Auk*, X, 1893, pp. 51, 52) and in remarks apropos of Dr. Stejneger's paper on the same subject (l. c., pp. 184, 185). It is therefore not a surprise that he should follow the A. O. U. Code respecting the rule of priority and adopt the earliest specific name in the case of *Pitta moluccensis* and *P. sordida* in the place of later-given though more current names favored by some other recent writers on the group. We regret to note, however, that he lapses in consistency in accepting the amended form *arcuatus* for Gould's earlier though less fortunate *arguatus*.

Few groups of birds present greater beauty of plumage than the Pittidæ or Ant-Thrushes, or offer greater opportunities for the skill of the artist in illustration, and in the present instance the plates give ample testimony of their ability.—J. A. A.

**Sharpe on the Zoögeographical Areas of the World.**<sup>1</sup>— In the August number of 'Natural Science,' Dr. Sharpe has given a summary of his views on the different regions, subregions, etc., of the world as illustrated in his recent course of lectures on the 'Geographical Distribution of Birds' delivered at the Royal Institution. In his introductory remarks he laments the "want of zoological statistics for vast tracts of the Old World," and congratulates American naturalists on "the success which has resulted from their patient collection of materials, which leaves them in the proud position of having better statistics to work upon than are possessed by the ornithologists of any other portion of the globe," with the exception, perhaps, of those of the British Islands.

Dr. Sharpe says: "Some of Mr. Allen's conclusions ('*Auk*,' 1893, pp. 97-150) with regard to the main divisions of the Old World are the same as those of Dr. Reichenow, and I think that they are, in both instances, too sweeping; but the recognition and definition of an Arctic Zone, or 'Realm,' as Mr. Allen calls it, is a fact which must henceforward be admitted by all ornithologists." After this last admission it is somewhat disappointing to find him still partitioning the northern portion of the northern hemisphere into two primary areas, under the very familiar names of 'Nearctic Region' and 'Palæarctic Region.' This inconsistency, however, he accounts for as follows: In giving reasons for not adopting "Mr. Allen's nomenclature in its entirety," he says: "I may in due time be brought to speak of 'Realms,' but the same conservatism which prevents my adopting

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<sup>1</sup> On the Zoo-geographical Areas of the World, illustrating the Distribution of Birds. By R. Bowdler Sharpe, LL. D., F. L. S. *Natural Science*, Vol. III, No. 18, pp. 100-108. Aug., 1893. With Maps.