

it will be noticed, are conspicuously smaller than even the males of the race I call *M. melanotis*. I at first thought that these two specimens might be *Milvus migrans*, which has been recorded from Afghanistan; but on comparison with specimens of the latter species from Sarepta, it became evident that the Gilgit birds are distinct.

24. *SYRNIUM BIDDULPHI*, sp. nov. (Plate XIV.)

*Adult female.* Crown and space between the facial disks uniform blackish brown; occiput, nape, and hind neck dark brown, the feathers indented on the margins with greyish white, giving a spotted appearance to this region. Back, minor and median wing-coverts, rump and upper tail-coverts greyish brown, profusely vermiculated with greyish white; the scapulars and median wing-coverts with large white spots on their outer webs. Primaries and their coverts dark brown, with pale ochraceous-brown bars and tips, which are stippled with dark brown, the bars on the outer webs of the third to sixth primaries creamy white, slightly mottled with brown; secondaries pale brown, freckled with irregular greyish white bars, which become pure white on the margins of the inner webs. Uropygials pale greyish brown, irregularly vermiculated with dark brown, and having only indications of one or two very narrow imperfect bars near the tips; the next pair of rectrices with the outer webs unbarred, and coloured like the uropygials, the inner webs broadly barred with dull brown; the rest of the tail-feathers dark brown, irregularly barred on both webs with pale ochreous, which becomes nearly white towards the margins of the inner webs; all the rectrices tipped with white. Facial disk greyish white, the feathers with blackish shafts and two or three narrow bars of dark brown across both webs; the ruff surrounding the disk blackish brown, beautifully barred with white, above the anterior part of the eye and on the chin the white bars suffused with rufous. Underparts white, all the feathers with a central broad streak of blackish brown, and complete transverse bars on both webs of the same colour, the feathers of the fore neck having one bar, those on the breast two, on the abdomen

three, and on the under tail-coverts four; under wing-coverts and axillaries white, irregularly barred and spotted with brown. Tibial feathers cream-colour, transversely barred with brown; feathers covering the tarsi and toes white, irregularly mottled here and there with brown. Cere green; bill green, yellow at tip; iris black. Length 19 inches, expanse 44·5, wing 13·6, tail 8·6, tarsus 1·85, bill from gape 1·45, cere 0·7, closed wing short of end of tail 2.

*Adult male.* Similar to the female in colour, but the ear-coverts darker and more strongly barred. Cere olive; bill green, yellow at tip; iris dark brown; toe-scales pale green; claws black, slaty at bases. Length 18·7 inches, expanse 42·6, wing 12·7, tail 8·5, tarsus 1·8, bill from gape 1·46, cere 0·65, closed wings short of end of tail 1·7; weight 1 lb. 3¼ oz.

The measurements given above were taken from fresh birds, the wings being measured on the under surface. As this is not the usual practice in measuring wings of large birds, I must mention that, taken on the upper surface with a tape, the wing of the female has a length of 14 inches, and that of the male 13.

This species differs from *S. davidi* by its smaller size, vermiculated (not plain) rump, and different character of markings. From *S. nivicolum* it differs in being larger, in not having the uropygials barred, and by its colour. With the ordinary form of *Syrnium aluco* it could not be confounded for a moment; from the large grey form of *S. aluco*, of which I have examined fine female specimens from Stockholm and Tangier, with the wing 11·5, it differs in its much greater size (the male Gilgit bird being considerably larger than even the largest female of this race), in its paler and greyer colour, different character of markings, &c.

This fine Owl is probably a permanent resident in the Gilgit district, and seems to keep closely to the forests. I obtained my specimens on the 30th September and 13th November.

## 25. ASIO OTUS (Linn.).

The Long-eared Owl arrives early in March, and is com-



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SYRNIUM BIDDULPHI