8. Syrniwm david, sp. n.

S. similc S. nivicolo sed multo majus et saturatisus: supra-
caudalibus et caudâ basali immaculatis distinguedium.
Long. tot. 20, alæ 14·6, caud. 10·4, tars. 2·1.

Soon after commencing my studies on Owls, Père David
pointed out to me that he was convinced that he had shot two
species of Syrniwm at Moupin, one of which was the true S.
nivicolum, and the other had been determined by M. Jules
Verreaux as Ptyxw fulvescens*, and still bore this identification
in his own handwriting. On comparing the Moupin example
with a specimen of the latter, shot by Père David in Pekin,
it was easily seen that the two species were distinct; for S.
rufescens belongs to the groups of S. uralense and S. nebula-
sum, and has, like them, a light-coloured disk, finely irro-
rated with circular bars of darker brown. The Moupin Owl,
on the contrary, has a dusky brown and mottled countenance,
so that it comes much nearer to S. nivicolum. The uniform
upper tail-coverts distinguish it as regards plumage; and its
size is very much larger; there are also many other slight
differences.

The specimen is a male; and I therefore give the dimen-
sions of a pair of the true S. nivicolum, shot by Père David
in Moupin:—♀, total length 15·5 inches, wing 12·8, tail
8·3, tarsus 2·0; ♂, total length 15, wing 11·6, tail 7·5.

It will thus be seen that the male of S. david is larger
than the female of S. nivicolum. I am indebted to the cour-
tesy of Professor Alphonse Milne-Edwards for permission to
describe this new species, which forms part of the ornitho-
logical collection in the Paris Museum.


This little Owl, the type of which was known to be in the
Paris Museum, has always puzzled ornithologists, and baffled

* This species is described in the text of the 'Fauna Japonica' as S.
rufescens, and as S. fusescens on the plate. It ought therefore to be
called Syrniwm rufescens. It is the more necessary to determine the cor-
rect title of the species, because there is a Syrniwm fulvescens of Sclater
and Salvin, from Central America.