

Subgenus *Lamprotreron* Bonaparte

Lamprotreron Bonaparte, *Consp. Av.*, 2, 1854, p. 17. Type, by original designation, *Columba superba* Temminck.

Pronounced sexual dimorphism is present in the three species belonging to this subgenus, and prominent features in the plumage of adult males are a broad pectoral band and a red to mauve

forecrown. Juveniles resemble the adult female.

Only the most widely distributed species – *Ptilinopus superbus* – reaches Australia.



SUPERB FRUIT-DOVE

Ptilinopus superbus (Temminck)

Columba Superba Temminck, in Knip, *Les Pigeons*, 1810, les colombes, p. 75, pl. 33. ('O-Taïti', error = Halmahera.)

OTHER NAMES

Purple-crowned Fruit-Dove or Fruit-Pigeon, Purple-crowned Pigeon, Superb Fruit-Pigeon.

DESCRIPTION

Length 24 cm.

ADULT MALE

Forehead and lores to occiput deep purple; sides of head to nape green, with rufous tinge on nape; hindneck and upper mantle to sides of breast reddish-chestnut; lower mantle and back to upper tail-coverts dull green; tertials and scapulars blue-black with broad dull green edges giving a spotted appearance; bend of wing dull dark mauve-blue; lesser and median wing-coverts dull green, with base of feathers streaked blue-black and with narrow yellow margins; secondaries, secondary-coverts and inner primary-coverts dull green with yellow margins, and blue-black towards bases of inner webs; outer primary-coverts and primaries dull blue-black with variable dull green wash on outer webs and narrow white margins; undersides of flight feathers and underwing-coverts grey; chin white, becoming pale grey on throat and forecheeks; bifurcated feathers of upper breast purple with broad pale grey tips giving a speckled appearance; lower breast bluish-grey, bordered below by a broad purple-black band; abdomen very pale yellow, almost white; flanks green, feathers with pale yellow edges, and extending to sides of upper and lower abdomen as two incomplete bands; thighs and under tail-coverts cream-white on inner webs, feathers dull green with pale yellow edges; central tail-feathers dull green above, pale grey below; lateral tail-feathers dull green above, pale grey below, with terminal dull white band; bill olive-green with grey-green tip; iris yellow with blackish spill extending through front from pupil; eyering bluish-grey; legs and feet dull crimson; weight 94–155 g.

47 specimens: wing 122–137 (130.4) mm, tail 58–74 (68.9) mm, bill 15–19 (16.8) mm, tarsus 19–23 (20.6) mm.

ADULT FEMALE

Head green with prominent mauve-blue patch on hindcrown; hindneck, mantle and sides of breast green; chin and throat white, on throat feathers with broad pale grey tips; bifurcated feathers of upper breast green with broad grey tips; lower breast grey-green, feathers with pale yellow tips towards abdomen; weight 81–120 g. 34 specimens: wing 124–131 (127.5) mm, tail 63–70 (65.6) mm, bill 15–18 (16.7) mm, tarsus 19–22 (20.2) mm.

JUVENILES (ANWC B15521 ♂)

Like adult female, but no mauve-blue patch on hindcrown; entire breast green, feathers with pale yellow tips giving a barred appearance; iris pale brown; eyering grey; legs and feet grey-brown.

DISTRIBUTION

Eastern Australia and from New Guinea east to the Solomon Islands and west to the Moluccas, Sulawesi and possibly the Sulu Archipelago.

SUBSPECIES

1. *P. s. superbus* (Temminck)

The nominate subspecies, as described above, occurs in eastern Australia and throughout the remainder of the range, except in Sulawesi and possibly the Sulu Archipelago where replaced by *P. s. temminckii*. In eastern Australia, the breeding range is restricted to coastal and subcoastal north Queensland, from Cape York Peninsula south to about lat. 18°S but, as migrants, casual visitors

OPPOSITE:

Superb Fruit-Dove

Ptilinopus superbus superbus

with water vine *Cissus hypoglauca*.

Left: ANWC B32613 adult ♂

Eungella, Qld, 7 September 1999.

Right: ANWC B14348 adult ♀

Kuranda, Qld, 21 December 1971.