ÆLURŒDUS VIRIDIS (*Latham*).

95.

Cat-bird.

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In nearly every country in the world there seems to be some bird which has the name of "Cat-bird" bestowed upon it. In North America it is a Mocking-bird, *Galeoscoptes carolinensis*, which bears the name, and in Australia the present species is known to the colonists by the same title on account of the strange resemblance of its note to that of a cat. Structurally and in general appearance the bird is allied to the Bower-birds, but it has never been known to build a "bower." Mr. Gould says:—"While in the district in which this bird is found, my attention was directed to the acquisition of all the information I could obtain respecting its habits, as I considered it very probable that it might construct a bower similar to that of the Satin-bird; but I could not satisfy myself that it does, nor could I discover its nest or the situation in which it breeds; it is doubtless, however, among the branches of the trees of the forest in which it lives." As will be seen below, the nest and eggs are now known, but Mr. North also stated in 1891 that he had never heard of any "bower" being built by the Australian Cat-birds.

The range of the Cat-bird is given by Mr. North as the coastal ranges of New South Wales and Southern Queensland. He writes:—"It is particularly plentiful at Cambewarra and the Kangaroo valley, in the Illawarra district, and is found in favourable localities all through the southern portions of the coast ranges, becoming scarcer, however, as the boundary of the colony is approached. The rich bushes in the neighbourhood of the Clarence, Richmond, and Tweed rivers are also strongholds of this species, and it is also found, but not so freely dispersed, in the extreme south of Queensland." Mr. Gould observes:—"So far as our knowledge extends, this species is only found in New South Wales, where it inhabits the luxuriant forests that extend along the eastern coast between the mountain ranges and the sea; those of Illawarra, the Hunter, the Macleay, and the Clarence, and the cedar-brushes of the Liverpool Range, being, among many others, localities in which it may be found: situations suitable to the Regent- and Satin-birds are equally adapted to the habits of the Cat-bird, and I have not unfrequently seen them all three feeding together on the same tree."

It should be noted that Dr. Ramsay included Victoria and South Australia among the habitats of the present species; but I presume that these countries were inserted by mistake in the 'Table' of Australian birds, as Mr. North does not include them in his more recently-given range of the species.

Mr. Gould gives the following account of the habits of the Cat-bird:—"The wild fig and the native cherry, when in season, afford an abundant supply. So rarely does it take insects that I do not recollect ever finding any remains in the stomachs of those specimens I dissected. In its disposition it is neither a shy nor a wary bird, little caution being required to approach it, either when feeding or while quietly perched upon the lofty branches of the trees. It is at such times that its loud, harsh, and extraordinary note is heard; a note which differs so much from that of all other birds that, having been once heard, it can never be mistaken. In comparing it to the nightly concerts of the domestic cat, I conceive that I am conveying to my readers a more perfect idea of the note of this species than could be given by pages of description. This concert is performed either by a pair or by several individuals, and nothing more is required than for the