

GALLINULA RUFICRISSA, Gould.

Rufous-vented Gallinule.

Gallinula ruficrissa, Gould in Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist., 4th ser., vol. iv. p. 110.

For a knowledge of the existence of this new species of Gallinule I am indebted to Mr. F. G. Waterhouse, Curator of the Museum of the South Australian Institute at Adelaide, South Australia, who, in a note accompanying the specimen from which my figure was taken, states that it was obtained from Mr. Rainbird, a collector, who shot it on the Cape River, in Queensland. Mr. Waterhouse was under the impression that it was a new species of *Tribonyx*, but it appears to me to be more nearly allied to the genus *Gallinula*. With the assistance of Mr. G. R. Gray I have carefully compared it with all the members of the last-mentioned genus in the British Museum, also with the descriptions of all the known species; and we cannot find one with which it can be considered identical. I have therefore characterized it as new. Its nearest ally appears to be the *Gallinula olivacea* of Meyen, from Manilla (*vide* Nova Acta, 1834, p. 109, t. 20); but that bird is of larger size, and is of still greater disproportion in the length of its legs.

It gives me great pleasure to figure this species so soon after its discovery, since it may incite collectors to obtain additional specimens and some information respecting its habits and economy, of which at present nothing is known.

The features which distinguish the *Gallinula ruficrissa* from the typical members of the genus are the absence of white spots on the flanks, and the uniform pale rufous colouring of the vent and under tail-coverts; it is this latter character that allies it to the *G. olivacea*, in which the same parts are similarly coloured, while in the other Gallinules they are black and white; in my opinion the *Gallinula phenicura* perhaps the *Gallinula Akool*, of India, are also nearly allied to it.

Professor Reichenbach has instituted the genus *Amaurornis* for the reception of the *G. olivacea*, with which the late Prince Bonaparte associates the *G. femoralis* of Tschudi; it is for ornithologists to decide upon the propriety of such a separation.

Head, all the upper surface, wings, and tail brownish olive; sides of the face, neck, breast, and under surface deep olive-grey; vent and under tail-coverts pale rusty red; bill greenish yellow, with a mark of red on the base of the culmen; legs and feet greenish yellow.

The figures in the accompanying Plate, both drawn from the same specimen, are of the natural size.