

SPHECOTHERES FLAVIVENTRIS, *Gould.*

Yellow-bellied Sphecotheres.

Sphecotheres flaviventris, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., 1849, p. 111.

By the discovery of another species of this form on the north-eastern coast of Australia, we know that the fauna of that country is graced by at least two well-defined species of the genus, namely the *S. Australis* and the present bird, which may always be distinguished from its near ally by the beautiful jonquil-yellow of its under surface. Mr. MacGillivray informs me that it is a very common bird in the neighbourhood of Cape York, where he daily observed it either in pairs or in small parties of three or four individuals, which were generally very shy and difficult of approach. It frequents the open forest land in company with the *Tropidorhynchus argenteiceps*, and resorts to the branches for its food, which consists of fruit of various kinds, such as figs, &c. His specimens were procured by keeping himself carefully concealed beneath one of its favourite feeding trees and watching until an opportunity offered of getting a shot. He once saw several nests which he had no doubt belonged to this species, nearly all of which were built among the top-most branches of very large gum-trees, which he could not induce the natives to attempt to climb; a deserted nest was however within reach, being placed on an overhanging branch not more than twenty feet from the ground; it measured about a foot in diameter, and was composed of small sticks lined with finer ones. As is the case with the other members of the genus, the sexes offer a marked difference in colour.

The male has the crown of the head and cheeks glossy black; orbits, and a narrow space leading to the nostrils naked, and of a light buffy yellow, or flesh-colour; all the upper surface, wing-coverts, outer webs of the secondaries, and a patch on either side of the chest, olive-green; chin, chest, abdomen and flanks beautiful yellow; vent and under tail-coverts white; primaries and inner webs of secondaries black, edged with grey; tail black, the external web and the apical half of the internal web of the outer feather on each side white; the apical half of the second feather on each side white; the next, or third, on each side with a large spot of white at the tip; bill black; feet flesh-colour.

The female is striated on the head with brown and whitish; has the upper surface olive-brown; the wing-feathers narrowly edged with greenish grey; the under surface white, with a conspicuous stripe of brown down the centre of each feather; and the vent and under tail-coverts white, without striæ.

The Plate represents the two sexes of the natural size.