

EÖPSALTRIA CAPITO, *Gould.*

Large-headed Robin.

Eöpsaltria Capito, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xix. p. 285.

THE great country of Australia is characterized by many striking and varied physical features; in none other, I believe, does the earth's surface present so many different aspects, or are the contrasts more strongly marked, the central area being either a sterile waste of burning sand or an inland sea, as a drouthy or rainy season prevails; while on the inner slopes of the mountain ranges towards this area, there exist beautiful and fertile downs richly clothed with grass, interspersed with *Eucalypti* and *Angophoræ*, presenting a park-like picture to the eye. Again, the outer slopes of the high ranges which skirt along the south and eastern coasts, at a distance of from forty to sixty miles from the sea, have in the course of time changed into a soil so rich and deep as to be favourable, not only to the growth of the largest kinds of *Eucalypti*, but to magnificent cedars, fig-trees and palms of two or three species. Favoured by an aspect which commands the rays of the sun, and by humidity from the sea, the vegetation here becomes of that dense and peculiar character technically known in New South Wales by the name of Brushes; these districts are tenanted by a bird-life equally peculiar; so that the fauna of the brushes is as distinct from that of the plains as if hundreds of miles of sea rolled between. The unobtrusively coloured bird here represented is a native of the brushes of the south-east coast, and is tolerably plentiful in the neighbourhood of the Clarence, the Manning and the Brisbane rivers. Its existence was not known to me when the "Birds of Australia" were published; and its discovery is due to the late Mr. Strange, who sent me several specimens a short time after its completion. Of its habits nothing is known, but they are doubtless very similar to those of the other *Eöpsaltriæ*. Like them the sexes do not differ in colour, but the female may generally be distinguished by her somewhat smaller size.

Upper surface olive-green, inclining to brown on the head; wings and tail slaty-brown, faintly margined with olive-green; ear-coverts grey; lores, a line below the eye and the throat greyish white; under surface yellow; irides hazel; bill black; feet brownish flesh-colour.

The figures are of the natural size.