

## DRYMODES SUPERCILIARIS, *Gould.*

### Eastern Scrub Robin.

*Drymodes superciliaris*, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., July 23, 1850.—Jard. Cont. Orn. 1850.  
*Trokāroo*, Aborigines of Cape York.

PERHAPS one of the most interesting of the smaller birds discovered by me in the brushes of South Australia, was a species of this form to which I gave the name of *Drymodes brunneopygia*, and which I found to be a very recluse bird, inhabiting the densest scrub, retreating from danger and shrouding itself from observation by hopping beneath the thick herbage. I did not fail to remark, also, that its habits were very similar to those of the Saxicoline birds: the new species, represented on the accompanying Plate, is an inhabitant of the north-east coast of Australia; and it will be seen by the following notes by Mr. MacGillivray, that the two birds, as might be supposed, accord as nearly in their habits as they are allied in structure.

“While traversing on the 17th of November, 1849, a thin open scrub of small saplings growing in a stony ground thickly covered with dead leaves, about five or six miles inland from Cape York, I observed a nest placed on the ground at the foot of a small tree; its internal diameter was four inches and a half; it was outwardly composed of small sticks with finer ones inside, and lined with grass-like fibres, and was moreover surrounded with dead leaves heaped up to a level with its upper surface; it contained two eggs an inch long by seven-tenths of an inch broad, of a regular oval shape, and of a very light stone-grey thickly covered with small umber blotches, which increased in size and were more thickly placed at the larger end: they were placed side by side, with the large end of one opposite the small end of the other. After watching near the nest for some time, one of the owners appeared, and was procured; but putrefaction having commenced before my return to the ship, I could not ascertain the sex with certainty: it approached me within three or four yards, hopping with sudden jerks over the leaves, and moving by fits and starts like the Robin of Europe; it uttered no cry or note during the time I was watching its motions; two others were afterwards procured in the same kind of open scrub, and the birds being probably in the immediate neighbourhood of their nest, hopped up quite close to the observer.”

The sexes assimilate in colour, but the female is somewhat smaller than the male.

Lores white; immediately above and below the eye a black mark forming a conspicuous moustache; crown of the head and upper surface reddish brown, passing into chestnut-red on the rump and six middle tail-feathers; remainder of the tail-feathers black, tipped with white; wings black, with the base of the primaries and the tips of the coverts white, forming two bands across the wing; throat and centre of the abdomen fawn-white; chest and flanks washed with tawny; irides umber-brown; legs and feet flesh-colour.

The Plate represents the two sexes of the natural size.