PTILONORHYNCHUS SMITHII, *Vig. and Horsf.*

Cat Bird.

Varied Roller, Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. iii. p. 86.
Ptilonorhynchus Smithii, Lath. MSS. Vig. and Horsf. in Linn. Trans., vol. xv. p. 264.
——————— *viridis*, Wagl. Syst. Av., sp. 3.
Kitta virescens, Temm. Pl. Col., 396.
Cat Bird of the Colonists of New South Wales.

So far as our knowledge extends, this fine species is only found in New South Wales, where it inhabits all those 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 always 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, when the branches bore a thick crop of berries and fruits. The wild fig, and the native cherry, when in season, afford it an abundant supply. So rarely do they 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, like that of the animal whose name it bears, is performed either by a pair or several individuals, and nothing more is required than for the hearer to shut his eyes from the neighbouring foliage to fancy himself surrounded by London grimalkins of house-top celebrity.

While in the district in which this bird is found, my almost undivided 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. It certainly is not a migratory bird, although it may range from one portion of the brushes to another, according as the supply of food may be more or less abundant.

The sexes do not offer the slightest difference in plumage, or any external character by which the male may be distinguished from the female; she is, however, rather less brilliant in her markings, and somewhat smaller in size.

Head and back of the neck olive-green, with a narrow line of white down each of the feathers of the latter; back, wings and tail grass-green, with a tinge of blue on the margins of the back-feathers; the wing-coverts and secondaries with a spot of white at the extremity of their outer web; primaries black, their external webs grass-green at the base and bluish green for the remainder of their length; all but the two central tail-feathers tipped with white; all the under surface yellowish green, with a spatulate mark of yellowish white down the centre of each feather; bill light horn-colour; irides brownish red; feet whitish.

The Plate represents the two sexes of the natural size.