

PITTA VIGORSII, *Gould.*

Vigors' Pitta.

Pitta brachyura, Vig. & Horsf. in Linn. Trans., vol. xv. p. 218.

A SINGLE specimen of this beautiful species of *Pitta* forms part of the collection of the Linnean Society of London, where it has always been considered as identical with the *Pitta brachyura*, but from which it differs in many important characters, among the most conspicuous of which may be noticed its larger size, and the narrow streak of light greenish grey which passes from the nostrils over each eye, and nearly surrounds the occiput.

I have not been able to obtain any decided information respecting the portion of Australia from which this bird was obtained, but the eastern and northern coasts may be regarded as its most likely habitat; and I am unable to render any account of its habits, or the situations it frequents: several of the members of the group, however, particularly the other Australian species (*Pitta strepitans*), are known to prefer the thick brushes near the coast, where it hops about and scratches up the leaves, etc., in search of food. The *Pitta brachyura* is also said to perch on the topmost branches of decayed trees, and to resort to the sides of inland streams and waters, where it sports among the shallows, frequently wading up to its knees, which aquatic habits are indicated by the general character of its plumage; and as the present bird is very nearly allied to that species, it has doubtless similar habits.

Messrs. Vigors and Horsfield having omitted to notice the distinctive characters of this species, while engaged upon their elaborate Catalogue of the Australian Birds in the Linnean Society's collection, I have much pleasure in dedicating it to the memory of the late Mr. Vigors, whose high scientific attainments, especially in Ornithology, are so well known, that my testimony is unnecessary.

Crown of the head, ear-coverts, and back of the neck jet-black; a narrow stripe of greenish grey commences at the nostrils, passes over each eye, surrounds the crown, and nearly unites at the occiput; back, scapularies, outer edges of the secondaries, and the greater wing-coverts bronzy green; shoulders, rump, and upper tail-coverts fine lazuline blue; throat white; chest, flanks, and thighs tawny buff; centre of the abdomen dark blood-red, passing into scarlet on the under tail-coverts; primaries black, with a white bar across the centre of the third, fourth, fifth and sixth; tail black, tipped with green; bill dark brown; legs flesh-colour.

The figure is of the natural size.