

## MIRAFRA HORSFIELDII, *Gould.*

### Horsfield's Mirafra.

*Mirafra Horsfieldii*, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., January 27, 1847.

---

THIS species, which I have named *Horsfieldii* in honour of the founder of the genus, is sparingly dispersed over all the plains and open districts of New South Wales, but is more abundant on the inner side of the mountain ranges towards the interior than between the ranges and the sea; I have also a specimen procured during Dr. Leichardt's overland expedition from Moreton Bay, and one from the neighbourhood of Port Essington: both of these, although possessing characters common to each other, differ from specimens obtained in New South Wales in being larger, redder in colour, and in having a stouter bill—features which will probably hereafter prove them to be distinct, and which exhibit a near alliance to the true *Mirafra Javanica*.

The bird here figured is from New South Wales, where I found it more abundant on the Liverpool Plains than elsewhere; I also met with solitary individuals in the district of the Upper Hunter.

In its habits it is more terrestrial than arboreal, and will frequently allow itself to be almost trodden upon before it will rise, and then it merely flies to a short distance and descends again; it may often be seen perched upon the strong blades of grass and occasionally on the trees; it frequently mounts high in the air after the manner of the Skylark of Europe, singing all the time very melodiously, but with a weaker strain than that favourite bird; it also occasionally utters its pleasing song while perched on the branches of the trees.

The sexes are alike in colour and size.

General plumage ashy brown, the centre of the feathers dark brown, the latter colour predominating on the head, lower part of the back and tertiaries; wings brown margined with rufous; over the eye a stripe of buff; chin white; under surface pale buff; throat crossed by a series of dark brown spots arranged in a crescentic form; under surface of the wing rufous; bill flesh-brown at the base and dark brown at the tip; feet fleshy brown.

The figures are of the natural size.