

PYRRHOLÆMUS BRUNNEUS, *Gould.*

Brown Red-Throat.

Pyrrholæmus brunneus, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part VIII. p. 173.

Beé-rit-beé-rit, Aborigines of the mountain districts of Western Australia.

I FOUND this new bird tolerably abundant in the Belts of the Murray, about forty miles to the northward of Lake Alexandrina, where it gave a decided preference to low stunted bushes and fallen trunks of trees overgrown with herbage, under which it secreted itself; it sometimes rose to the top of a bush to sing, pouring forth a melody equal to any of the smaller birds of Australia, which must render it a general favourite when that portion of the country becomes colonized. It passes much of its time on the ground, hopping about with great celerity, and with its tail elevated considerably above the level of its back.

Since I killed my specimens it has been obtained by Mr. Gilbert in Western Australia, from whose notes I learn that it is there an inhabitant of the underwood and the thickest scrub; and that "it possesses a very sweet and melodious song, which it generally utters while perched on the extreme topmost branch of a small scrubby tree, and having repeated it two or three times, dives down into the impenetrable bush. While feeding it utters a weak, piping, call-like note. I never saw it fairly on the wing, for it seems averse to flying, but generally prefers creeping from bush to bush, and even if closely hunted merely flits a few yards. It makes its nest on the ground, precisely like the members of the genus *Calamanthus*. I found a pair building in the month of September; upon visiting the spot again after an interval of a week, the nest appeared finished, being lined with feathers, but there were no eggs; unfortunately from this time the birds deserted the nest; but Mr. Drummond tells me that he once saw the eggs, that they were three in number and of a green colour."

Lores greyish white; all the upper surface and wings brown; tail brownish black, the three lateral feathers on each side largely tipped with white; centre of the throat rufous; the remainder of the under surface brownish grey, passing into sandy buff on the flanks and under tail-coverts; irides reddish brown, with an outer ring of yellowish white; upper mandible reddish brown; lower mandible greenish white; legs and feet dark greenish grey.

The figures represent the two sexes of the natural size.