

DASYORNIS LONGIROSTRIS, *Gould.*

Long-billed Bristle-bird.

Dasyornis longirostris, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part VIII. p. 170.

Djyr-dal-ya, Aborigines of the lowland districts of Western Australia.

THE present species assimilates very closely in the character and colouring of its plumage to its eastern analogue, the *Dasyornis Australis*; but differs from that bird in being of a smaller size and in having a longer bill. It is a native of Western Australia, and is very generally distributed over the colony of Swan River, where it inhabits reed-beds and long grasses, and is occasionally seen in scrubby places. "It is so remarkably shy," says Mr. Gilbert, "that it is extremely difficult to get even a glimpse of it: from the little I could observe of the bird in a state of nature, it appeared to me to feed on the ground, where its actions are extremely quick, running over the surface with its tail erect, very like the *Maluri*; but when perched the tail is either carried horizontally, or hanging down. The only time when it can be seen with a chance of procuring specimens, is when it ascends to a small branch or the top of a scrub to sing. Its notes are extremely varied, some being very loud and clear, and so much lengthened as to approach a song; but no two birds sing alike.

"Its flight is extremely heavy and very low; in fact the bird appears incapable of rising more than a few yards above the scrub or long grass it inhabits; it is consequently very rarely seen on a tree.

"The nest is formed of dry wiry grass without any lining, more globular than those of the *Maluri*, but, like them, with an opening in the side; it is of rather a large size, and the only one I met with was built in a clump of coarse grass, sheltered by an overhanging dead bush, at about seven inches from the ground. It contained two eggs, the ground-colour of which is dull brownish white, blotched and freckled with purplish brown, some of the blotches appearing as if beneath the surface, particularly at the larger end, where they are most numerous.

"The stomach is thick and muscular, and its food consists of seeds and insects."

The sexes so closely resemble each other, that a representation and description of one will suffice for both.

All the upper surface brown; wings, tail-coverts and tail rufous brown, the latter indistinctly barred with a darker tint; under surface grey, gradually passing into the brown of the upper surface; irides bright reddish brown; upper mandible brown, lower mandible bluish green at the tip and greenish white at the base; legs bluish grey.

The Plate represents a male and female of the natural size.