

ERYTHRODRYAS ROSEA.

Rose-breasted Wood Robin.

Petroica rosea, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part VII. p. 142.

Erythrodryas rosea, Gould in Ibid., August 9, 1842.

THIS pretty little Robin inhabits all the brushes which skirt along the south-eastern coast of New South Wales. I also observed it to be numerous in the cedar brushes of the Liverpool range, and it doubtless frequents similar situations in all other parts of the country. It penetrates to the very depths of the forest, and chooses as its favourite abode the most secluded spots. It is a solitary species, more than a single pair being rarely seen at one time, is excessively quiet in its movements, and so tame, that in the course of my wanderings through the woods of Illawarra and in the neighbourhood of the Hunter, it frequently perched within two or three yards of me while resting my wearied limbs under a dense canopy of foliage, and listening to the songs of the various species surrounding me. What has been said respecting the habits and manners of the Pink-breasted Robin is equally descriptive of those of the present bird; its food is also precisely of the same kind, and is captured in a similar manner.

Although it is by no means rare in the localities I have mentioned, but few specimens yet adorn our Museums, and it certainly had not received any scientific appellation until I proposed the one given above, in a letter addressed to the Zoological Society of London during my residence in New South Wales.

Of its nidification and the number and colour of its eggs nothing is at present known.

It has a cheerful inwardly uttered song, the strain of which is very like that of the other Robins, but is much more feeble.

The male has the forehead crossed by a very narrow band of white; crown of the head, throat and all the upper surface dark slate-grey; chest rich rose-red, inclining to scarlet; lower part of the abdomen and under tail-coverts white; wings and the six central tail-feathers blackish brown; the three outer ones on each side tipped with white, the white predominating over the inner webs, particularly on the two lateral feathers; bill and feet blackish brown; gape and soles of the feet yellow.

The female differs considerably from her mate, having the forehead crossed by a narrow band of buff; all the upper surface greyish brown; wings brown; secondaries crossed by two obscure bands of greyish buff; tail of a browner tint, but otherwise marked like that of the male.

The figures are those of a male and a female of the natural size.