

## GERYGONE CULICIVORUS, *Gould.*

### Western Gerygone.

*Psilopus culicivorus*, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part VIII. p. 174.

*Waŕ-ryle-bur-dang*, Aborigines of the lowlands of Western Australia.

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THIS species is plentifully dispersed over the colony of Swan River in Western Australia, where it inhabits forests, scrubs, and all situations where flowering trees abound, and where it is seen either in pairs or in small groups of four or five in number. Its food consists wholly of aphides and other small insects, which are captured on the wing or from off the flowers; it sometimes traverses the smaller branches, and even the upright boles of trees, prying about and searching for its prey with the most scrutinizing care. Its powers of flight are rarely exerted for any other purpose than to convey it from shrub to shrub, and for its little sallies in pursuit of insects, much after the manner of the true Flycatchers.

Its notes are very varied, being at one time a singing kind of whistle, and at others a somewhat pleasing and plaintive melody; but it has a singular habit of uttering, when flitting from tree to tree, a succession of notes and half-notes, some of which are harmoniously blended, while others are equally discordant, and resemble a person producing notes at random on an instrument with which he is unacquainted.

It is said by the natives to breed in September and October.

The nest is suspended by the top to the extremity of a branch, and is formed of threads of bark, small spiders' nests, green moss, &c., all felted together with cobwebs and vegetable fibres, and warmly lined with feathers; it is about eight inches in length, pointed at the top and at the bottom, and about nine inches in circumference in the middle; the entrance is a small round hole, about three inches from the top, with a slight projection immediately above it. I did not succeed in procuring the eggs.

The sexes are alike in plumage.

All the upper surface olive-brown; wings brown margined with olive; two centre tail-feathers brown; the remainder white, crossed by an irregular band of black and tipped with brown, the band upon all but the external feathers so blending with the brown at the tip that the white between merely forms a spot on the inner web; lores blackish brown; line over the eye, throat and chest light grey, passing into buff on the flanks, and into white on the centre of the abdomen and under tail-coverts; irides light reddish yellow; bill and feet black.

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