

GERYGONE FUSCA, *Gould.*

Fuscous Gerygone.

Psilopus fuscus, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part V. p. 147 ; and in Syn. Birds of Australia, Part IV.

Gerygone fusca, Gould in De Strzelecki's Phys. Deser. of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, p. 321.

THE *Gerygone fusca* is an inhabitant of New South Wales, where it is to be found in all the brushes near the coast, as well as in the cedar and other brushes on the sides of the ranges in the interior. As its form would lead us to imagine, it has much of the habit of the Flycatcher, and lives almost exclusively upon insects, such as aphides and other swift-winged species, which are as frequently taken on the wing as they are on the under sides of leaves, &c. It particularly loves to dwell in the most retired and gloomy part of the forest, among the creeping Bignonias, &c., and is a most active and lively little bird, flitting about from branch to branch ; sometimes, like the true Flycatchers, returning again to the same branch, and at others hanging to the smaller branches and scrutinizing the under sides of the leaves, after the manner of the *Acanthizæ*.

Its song, which is almost incessantly poured forth, is a pleasing, twittering sound.

The breeding-season comprises the months of September, October and November. The nest is a delicate and beautiful structure of a domed oblong form, the lower end terminating in a point, with the entrance at the side near the top covered with a well-formed spout, which completely excludes both sun and rain from the interior of the nest ; it is about eight inches in height and ten in circumference ; the spout projecting about two inches, and the entrance being scarcely an inch in diameter. The body of a nest found in the brushes of the Hunter was composed of green moss, mouse-eared lichen, soft wiry grasses, the inner bark of trees and other materials, and was lined with extremely soft grasses. The eggs are three in number, and are very similar, both in size and colour, to those of the *Malurus cyaneus*, being minutely speckled with red on a white ground ; they are seven and a half lines long by five and a half lines broad.

The sexes are alike in colour.

Crown of the head, all the upper surface and wings dark fuscous brown, slightly tinged with olive ; two centre tail-feathers brown ; the remainder white at the base, succeeded by a broad band of deep blackish brown, round which is a broad stripe of white, which entirely crosses the outer feathers, but only the inner webs of the remainder, the tips pale brown ; throat and chest grey ; abdomen and under tail-coverts white ; bill and feet deep blackish brown ; irides bright brownish red.

The Plate represents the bird of the natural size.