## UROCISSA SINENSIS.

## Chinese Blue Pie.

Cuculus sinensis, Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i p. 171.—Ib. Gmel. edit., tom. i. p. 418.—Briss. Orn., vol. iv. p. 157, tab. 14 A. fig. 2.—Id. 8vo. tom. ii. p. 85.—Lath. Ind. Orn., vol. i. p. 217.

Sanhia de la Chine, Buff. Hist. Nat. des Ois., tom. vi. p. 389.

Chinese Cuckow, Lath. Gen. Syn., vol. ii. p. 530.—Shaw, Nat. Misc., pl. 277.—Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. iii. p. 273.

Coracias melanocephalus, Lath. Ind. Orn., vol. i. p. 170.—Shaw, Gen. Zool., vol. vii. p. 397.

Black-headed Roller, Lath. Gen. Syn. Supp., p. 86.—Ib. Gen. Hist., vol. iii. p. 82.

Corvus erythrorhynchos, Gmel. edit. Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 372.—Lath. Ind. Orn., vol. i. p. 161.—Daud. Orn., tom. ii. p. 240. pl. 15.—Shaw, Gen. Zool., vol. vii. p. 381.

Geay de la Chine, Buff. Hist. Nat. des Ois., tom. iii. p. 115.—Ib. Pl. Enl., p. 622.

La Pie bleue, Le Vaill. Ois. d'Afriqe, tom. ii. p. 24. pl. 27.

Psilorhinus sinensis, Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. ii. p. 308, Psilorhinus, sp. 4.—Blyth, Journ. Asiat. Soc. Beng., vol. xv. p. 27.

Calocitta sinensis, Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 381, Calocitta, sp. 1.

Urocissa sinensis, Cab. Mus. Hein., p. 87.—Horsf. and Moore, Cat. of Birds in Mus. East Ind. Comp., vol. ii. p. 577.—Swinh. in Ibis, vol. iii. p. 43.—Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xxvii. p. 200.

Red-billed Jay, Lath. Gen. Syn., vol. i. p. 390.—Id. Supp., vol. ii. p. 112.—Ib. Gen. Hist., vol. iii. p. 27.

The species here represented is one of those so frequently brought under our notice in Chinese drawings, in some of which it is figured with remarkable truthfulness, while in others the artist has taken certain liberties; but the bird is too conspicuous, both in form and colour, to be mistaken for any other, however inaccurately it may be delineated. It must be a very conspicuous object in the woodland districts of China, where it evidently takes the place of the *Urocissa occipitalis* of India and Nepaul. From this well-known species it differs in several particulars: first, in the more decided markings of the tail, and the lesser amount of the white tipping of all the feathers of this lengthened and conspicuous organ; and secondly, in the blue colouring of the nape of the neck, by which it may be at once recognized.

But little has been recorded respecting the habits and economy of this important and strikingly coloured group of birds, consequently I have much pleasure in transcribing the note published by Mr. Swinhoe in the third volume of 'The Ibis,' referred to above.

"These handsome birds," says Mr. Swinhoe, "are often to be seen about the woods at Hongkong. You see a long-tailed form flying over the low trees with a direct flight, executed by short constant flaps, like that of a Magpie, the tail being held in nearly the same horizontal line as the body. The first disappears into a thick leafy tree, and is followed by a second, then a third and fourth, and sometimes more. Presently one shows himself on an exposed branch above, stretching out his red-billed head and whisking impatiently his two white-tipped tail-streamers. He sees you watching him, and at once sets up a cry of 'pink-pink' followed by a loud chatter, in which his comrades join, and you catch glimpses of violet and blue as they hasten from one tree to another in a contrary direction, until the distant sound of the 'pink-pink' note tells your ear that the Redlegs are far through the woods."

At the present moment (March 1861) a living example of this bird is to be seen in the Gardens of the Zoological Society of London. It has been recently received from China; and although not in such health and vigour as could be wished, will, I doubt not, under the fostering care of the Society's superintendent, soon show signs of amendment, and become a conspicuous ornament to their Menagerie.

I am indebted to John R. Reeves, Esq., for the fine examples of this species from which my figures were taken; and I feel that I should be wanting in courtesy were I not cordially to acknowledge my obligations to this gentleman, and to his late respected father, for the kindness and liberality with which they have at all times aided my scientific pursuits, and honoured my works with their support.

The sexes are alike, and may be thus described:—

Forehead and crown black, with a spot of pale bluish white on the tip of the central feathers of the latter; cheeks, sides of the neck, throat, and breast black; occiput and back of the neck pale bluish white; all the upper surface dull purplish blue; shoulders and the outer webs of the primaries and secondaries fine blue, their inner webs brownish black; all the secondaries crescented with white at the tip; the primaries margined along the middle portion of their outer web with vinaceous, and with a small oblong mark of white at the tip; upper tail-coverts dull blue at the base, fading into much paler blue towards their apices, and largely tipped with black; middle tail-feathers blue tipped with white; the lateral feathers blue at the base and creamy white at the tip, the two colours separated by a broad band of black, which decreases in breadth as the feathers recede from the centre; immediately behind this black band a large triangular mark of white occurs on the inner web, which in like manner decreases in size as the feathers recede from the centre; all the under surface creamy white washed with blue; bill and legs orange.

The Plate represents the bird about three-fourths of the size of life.