PYRRHULA AURANTIA, Gould.

Orange-coloured Bullfinch.

Pyrrhula aurantiaca, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part XXV. p. 222.

A more interesting little bird than the one here figured I have not seen for some time, and I am certain that a knowledge of its existence will be acceptable to every ornithologist; at present it is quite new, only one specimen having been sent to Europe. Thanks to the liberality of its discoverer, Dr. A. Leith Adams, of the 22nd Regiment, this unique bird has been added to the national collection at the British Museum, a very proper resting-place for all such novelties. Science, then, is indebted to Dr. Adams for its discovery, and I, as a devotee to natural history, especially so for his kindness in permitting me to give a figure and description of it in the "Birds of Asia."

There are portions of the great Asiatic continent to the north-westward of our Indian territories which are likely to present us with ornithological novelties for some time to come, inasmuch as they have been less visited than most others, and never very closely investigated. The countries I refer to are Affghanistan, Kafiristan, &c., where Vigne made himself known to fame as a traveller, and Dr. Griffith discovered the beautiful *Pucrasia castanea*.

Dr. Adams informed me that he first met with the Orange-coloured Bullfinch in the month of March 1852, on one of the wooded slopes of the Pir Pinjal Mountains, westward of the Valley of Cashmere; that its habits closely resemble those of *P. erythrocephala*, frequenting, as it does, thick bushy places, and being usually seen in small societies; that it is not uncommon in the valleys and jungles around Cashmere, and that, although the two species are so similar in their habits and in the localities they frequent, he never met with them in company; but he noticed that while the *P. erythrocephala* is tolerably abundant on the ranges around Simla, the present species was only seen on the hills in the neighbourhood and to the westward of Cashmere. Its call-note is not so loud as the clear whistle of the European Bullfinch, *P. vulgaris*, and somewhat resembles the chirp of the Greenfinch, *Chlorospiza chloris*. Dr. Adams tells me he skinned four or five examples, but that all were unfortunately lost, except the one he brought to Europe.

The male has the bill, face, wings, and tail deep purplish black; rump, upper and under tail-coverts white; the remainder of the upper and under surfaces rich reddish orange, deepest above; the lesser wing-coverts are also reddish orange, as is the apical half of the innermost of the greater wing-coverts, while the outer ones are slightly tipped with buffy white; irides black; feet pinky flesh-colour.

"The female differs from the male," says Dr. Adams, "in the following particulars, which you may depend upon being correct, as I transcribe them from notes written at the time the specimens were killed. She has the black circle round the bill as in the male; the head and neck ash-colour like the female of *P. vulgaris*; back ash-colour, slightly tinged with orange; tips of the wing-coverts the same; lower parts like the male, but not so brilliant, and more approaching to olive."

The Plate represents two males of the size of life, and a reduced figure of the female from Dr. Adams's description. The plant is the Rubus biflorus.

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