

SPHENOCICHLA ROBERTI, *Godw.-Aust. & Wald.*

Robert's Wedge-billed Wren.

Sphenocichla roberti, Godwin-Austen & Wald., Ibis, 1875, p. 250.—Hume, Stray Feathers, 1876, p. 217.—Id. Journ. As. Soc. Beng. xlv. p. 2, pl. vi. (1877).—Id. Str. F. 1879, p. 95.
Stachyrihynchus roberti, Hume, Str. F. 1879, p. 217, note.—Id. Str. F. 1879, p. 95.
Sphenocichla humii, pt., Sharpe, Brit. Mus. Cat. B. vi. p. 283 (1881: ♀).

THE present species replaces the *Sphenocichla humii* in the hills of Northern Cachar and Manipur, where it was discovered by Mr. William Robert, who has also collected many interesting new species in these little-known localities. When I talk of this bird as being a representative of *S. humii*, I must state that I am following the opinion of my friend Colonel Godwin-Austen; for I must confess that it seems to me very doubtful if the Sikhim bird and *S. roberti* are really distinct from one another. There is a certain difference in the size of the bills, but not sufficient to found a species upon; and I believe that future research will confirm the identity of *S. humii* and *S. roberti*, the latter, as figured by me, being the female.

The identical specimen from which my Plate was drawn was described by Mr. Sharpe in the 'Catalogue of Birds;' and I append his description.

"*Female*. Differs from the male in being of a reddish brown above, the feathers edged with black and subterminally spotted with ashy, producing a scaly appearance; the ashy spots absent on the head, and more rufescent on the lower back and rump; the upper tail-coverts numerous barred with dusky; wing-coverts like the back and spotted with ashy in the same manner, the greater coverts with numerous dusky cross bars; quills dark brown, the secondaries rufous brown externally, the innermost lighter brown and barred across with dusky; primaries externally barred with fulvous and more narrowly with blackish; tail-feathers dull brown with numerous bars of dusky blackish, about twenty-two bars being perceptible on the central feathers; forehead a little clearer than the crown, the lores dusky; upper edge of eyelid white; ear-coverts blackish, with nearly obsolete whitish shaft-lines; cheeks ashy whitish, the feathers with dark brown centres, and blackish margins, producing a scaly appearance; throat and chest scaly, the feathers being olive-brown in the centre, blackish on the margin, with a subterminal line of white; the feathers in the centre of the breast ashy, with less-pronounced blackish edges; sides of body reddish brown, slightly washed with olive, and mottled by the presence of a few feathers which are edged with blackish and subterminally marked with dull white; under tail-coverts rufous brown, subterminally marked with a line of dull white; under wing-coverts brown, those near the edge of the wing ashy; quills dusky brown below, pale ashy rufous along the edge of the inner web. Total length 6·5 inches, culmen 1·15, wing 2·95, tail 2·7, tarsus 1·1."

I have depicted the bird in two positions, of the natural size. Both figures have been drawn from a specimen of *S. roberti* kindly lent to me by Colonel Godwin-Austen.

[R. B. S.]