

UROCICHLA LONGICAUDATA.

Long-tailed Hill-Wren.

- Pnoepyga longicaudata*, Moore, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1854, p. 74.—Horsf. & Moore, Cat. B. East-India Co. Mus. i. p. 398 (1854).—Jerd. Birds of India, i. p. 490 (1862).—Gray, Hand-list of Birds, i. p. 188, no. 2561 (1869).—Jerd. Ibis, 1872, p. 130.—Hume, Stray Feathers, 1879, p. 93.
- *chocolatina*, Godwin-Austen & Walden, Ibis, 1875, p. 252.—Hume, Stray Feathers, 1876, p. 218; 1878, p. 235; 1879, p. 93.
- *caudata* (lapsu), Godwin-Austen in Jerd. Birds of India, 2nd ed. p. lxxviii (1877).
- Urocichla longicaudata*, Sharpe, Brit. Mus. Cat. of Birds, vol. vi. p. 263 (1881).

THE original specimen of this interesting little species was obtained by the late Dr. Samuel Griffith during one of his natural-history expeditions in the East. It passed into the Museum of the East-India Company, and was then described, from "North India," by Mr. F. Moore. In the Catalogue of the East-India Company's Museum, the home of this species was given as "Afghanistan," along with several other birds whose habitat should have been the Khasia hills. The mistake is well explained by the late Mr. Blyth, who writes as follows in 'The Ibis' for 1872 (p. 89):—"The late distinguished botanist, Samuel Griffith, as is well known, made zoological collections in Sindh and Afghanistan, and afterwards in the Khasia hills; and those collections having got mixed up, not a few of the Khasia species are erroneously set down as having been obtained in Afghanistan in the Catalogues of the specimens of Mammalia and Birds contained in the London East-India Museum, prepared by Messrs. Horsfield and Moore."

Nothing is known of the habits of this little Hill-Wren; but they doubtless assimilate closely to those of *Pnoepyga*, which *Urocichla* much resembles in style of plumage. Mr. Sharpe has referred the *P. chocolatina* of Colonel Godwin-Austen and Lord Walden to this species, having examined a specimen in the collection of the former gentleman. He has now examined a further series in Colonel Godwin-Austen's cabinet, and believes that *P. chocolatina* is the young bird, or at least one of the phases of plumage of *P. longicaudata*.

As far as we know at present, the Long-tailed Hill-Wren is an inhabitant of the Khasia and Munipur hills only. On the stand on which the type specimen was mounted, Mr. Sharpe found the locality entered as Darjiling; but there can be no doubt, as pointed out above, that it was procured by Griffith in the Khasia hills, where it would appear to be tolerably abundant.

The following description of the type specimen was given by Mr. Bowdler Sharpe in his recently published sixth volume of the 'Catalogue of Birds':—

"*Adult*. General colour above dark olive-brown, all the feathers edged with dusky brown, producing a somewhat scaly appearance everywhere, except those on the lower back, rump, and the upper tail-coverts, which are uniform; lesser and median wing-coverts like the back, the greater series and the quills rather more reddish brown; tail-feathers dull reddish brown; lores dusky; cheeks and ear-coverts uniform dark olive-brown; under surface of body light ochraceous buff, the flanks olive-brown; the sides of the upper breast slightly mottled with dusky brown tips to the feathers, and more or less distinct whitish shaft-streaks; chin slightly whiter than the throat and the breast, with a few white feathers in the centre; vent and under tail-coverts rather more reddish buff than the rest of the under surface; under wing-coverts like the breast, the edge of the wing brown; quills sepia-brown below, narrowly edged with ashy along the inner web. Total length 4·5 inches, culmen 0·5, wing 1·95, tail 1·95, tarsus 0·85."

The figures in the Plate represent an adult bird in two positions, of the size of life; they are drawn from a skin lent to me by Colonel Godwin-Austen.

[R. B. S.]