

CALLIOPE TSCHEBAIEWI, *Prjev.*

Mongolian Ruby-throat.

Calliope tschebaiewi, Prjevalsky, in Rowley's Orn. Misc. ii. p. 180, pl. 54. fig. 1.

THIS species which is one of the many interesting discoveries made by Colonel Prjevalsky during his travels in Mongolia, is very nearly allied to *Calliope pectoralis*, but is easily recognized by the much greater extent of the ruby-coloured throat, and by the conspicuous white cheeks, the bird resembling *C. kamtschatkensis* in the latter character. Colonel Prjevalsky writes, in his paper on the Birds of Mongolia, the Tangut Country, and the Solitudes of Northern Tibet :—" This species, called by me after my travelling companion, was found by us only in the Kan-su Mountains, and is much rarer than *C. kamtschatkensis*; it most probably inhabits only the bushes of the alpine region, and there principally the neighbourhood of brooks and rivulets. We did not succeed in finding a nest; but in the latter part of May I killed a female bird in which I found a completely developed greenish egg, which, however, was broken by the shot and could not be measured correctly. In its habits it very much resembles *C. kamtschatkensis*, and does not occur north of Kan-su."

The following is the description of the species given by Colonel Prjevalsky in the work quoted above :—

"*Male*. Crown, back, and rump dark olive; and the same shade is perceptible on the back and sides of the neck, and also on the ear-coverts; the small and median upper wing-coverts are dark grey. Moustachial stripes and eyebrows white; chin and centre of throat bright silky crimson; the edge separating the latter colour from the white moustachial stripe, lores, and crop are black; breast, stomach, and vent white; sides olive-grey. Quills and large wing-coverts brownish, with wide edges of the colour of the back; under wing-coverts grey. Two central tail-feathers blackish brown; the others are black with a white base and white spots on the ends; the upper tail-coverts are blackish grey.

"*Female*. Dark olive-colour above, dirty white underneath; sides of neck and crop dirty grey; flanks olive-grey; eyebrows white; ear-coverts brown; lores black. Quills and their large upper coverts brown; widely edged with the colour of the back; lesser coverts dirty grey; under wing-coverts yellowish. The two central tail-feathers dark olive-colour, the others black, with a white spot on the end, but without a white base; only small white spots are perceivable on the base of the second and third quills.

"Quills, 4=5 longest, 6=3 somewhat shorter, 2= (almost) 9; first twice as long as its coverts. In the sharply rounded tail of twelve feathers, the outer ones are 0·35 shorter than the central. Culmen black; tarsus in front black, behind horn-coloured; toes blackish; claws black; iris dark brown. Total length 6·5 inches, bill from gape 0·75, wing 3·02, tail 2·63, tarsus 2·25."

The figures in the Plate represent a male bird in two different positions, and a female. I must state that I have never seen the latter bird; but I have carefully compared the female of *Calliope pectoralis* in my possession with the description which Colonel Prjevalsky has given of the hen bird of his *C. tschebaiewi*; and I believe that the representation which I have given, founded as it is upon Prjevalsky's own description, will be discovered to be a faithful portrait of the female of the present species, which, after all, cannot be very different in appearance from the same sex of *C. pectoralis*. For the loan of the male bird figured by me I have to thank my friend Mr. Henry Seeböhm, of whose rich collection it now forms part, and by whom it was received in exchange from the St.-Petersburg Museum. It should be noticed that in Prjevalsky's figure he does not indicate the white at the base of the tail, which forms such a conspicuous feature of this species, although it is duly noticed by him in his description.

The figures in the accompanying Plate are of the natural size.