

RIMATOR MALACOPTILUS, *Blyth.*

Long-billed Wren.

Rimator malacoptilus, Blyth, Journ. Asiat. Soc. Beng., vol. xvi. pp. 154, 864, 878.—Ann. Nat. Hist., n. s., vol. xx. p. 317.—Blyth, Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. Calcutta, p. 338.—Horsf. & Moore, Cat. of Birds in Mus. East-Ind. Comp., vol. ii. p. 717.—Jerd. Birds of India, vol. i. p. 493.

Caulodromus Gracei, G. R. Gray, Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xv., 1847, p. 6.—Id. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 144, pl. 44. fig. 2.—Ann. Nat. Hist., n. s., vol. xix. p. 352.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., tom. i. p. 225.

Merva Jerdoni, Hodgs. Calc. Journ. Nat. Hist., 1847, p. 96.

Karriak tungbrek-pho of the Lepchas.

THE bird figured on the accompanying Plate must be regarded as one of the most curious and highly interesting species comprised in the Indian avifauna. It appears to be as scarce as it is singular in structure (for at present it is only known to us from the few skins that have been collected by Mr. Hodgson and one or two other observers); and a great length of time will probably elapse before we become acquainted with its habits and economy. Its proper situation in our systems is very questionable; Mr. Jerdon places it near *Troglodytes*, assigns to it the trivial name of the Long-billed Wren, and has little doubt of the propriety of the position he has given it. "Mr. Blyth," says he, "calls it a *Myiotherine* bird, approaching the Wrens. Gray puts it in his family *Certhinae*, as does Prince Bonaparte, but quite erroneously, I think." Its very short, almost an apology for a tail, its rounded wings, long bill, stout tarsi, lengthened hind toes and claws, and brown plumage, all indicate that it habitually resorts to the ground, or that the boles of fallen trees and moss-covered stones in the humid forests are the places it usually frequents. We should like to know the character and shape of its nest, whether open or domed, like that of *Troglodytes*, the colour and number of its eggs, the nature of its song, if any, and if the sexes assimilate in form and size and in the colouring of their plumage: with respect to this latter point the probability is that there is no visible difference.

Trusting I may live to read a more full account of the history of this highly curious bird from the pens of some of the young and rising ornithologists of our Indian Empire, I must now content myself with subjoining Mr. Jerdon's brief note respecting it. He says:—

"I procured two or three specimens of this remarkable bird at Darjeeling, but regret that I did not observe it myself. It was said to be chiefly a feeder on the ground, among brushwood and fallen trees; and I found the remains of insects in its stomach."

Upper surface deep brown, with fulvous shafts; scapularies and interscapularies mingled black and brown; primaries and tail deep brown, slightly tinged with rufous; under surface pale brown, striated with a darker tint; a black streak on each side of the throat; flanks ferruginous olive; under tail-coverts dark rust-red; bill fleshy at the base, dark horn-colour at the tip; legs brownish flesh-colour; irides light brown.

The figures are of the natural size.