IANTHOCINCLA AUSTENI.

Austen's Ianthocincla.

Trochalopteron Austeni, Jerd. in Ibis, 1872, p. 304.—Aust. in Journ. Asiat. Soc. Beng., vol. xxxix. part ii. p. 105.

Science is indebted to Major Godwin-Austen for the discovery of this interesting species, which adds one more to the numerous group of birds termed by Jerdon "Laughing Thrushes," and which are divided into several sections, under the generic terms of Cinclosoma, Garrulax, Ianthocincla, Trochalopteron, &c., the characters of which have never been definitely defined; and hence it is most difficult to determine to which of them a new species, when discovered, should be assigned. The present bird is certainly more nearly allied to the genus Ianthocincla than to any other; and it is under that generic term, therefore, that I have figured it. That all these birds must play an important part in the economy of nature in the countries to which they respectively belong is very evident from the great numbers of the species and the wide extent of their range over India, Nepal, China, the Philippines, Java, &c. As our knowledge of these birds becomes more extensive, accompanied probably by the acquisition of many additional species, the entire group will require a more careful revision than it has yet received; and we shall then be able to ascertain whether or not they should all be kept in the genus Garrulax or under either of the other terms above mentioned; at present the divisions and the synonymy of the entire group are in a state of the greatest confusion.

The following is Major Godwin-Austen's account of this species as given by him in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal 'above quoted:—

"This bird was pointed out to me as new by Dr. Jerdon, to whom I handed it over to describe; he has done so in 'The Ibis.' To complete here the account of the bird, I give a description as well. Above rufous brown, greenish upon the rump; feathers of the tail and neck pale-shafted, most markedly on the side of neck behind the ear-coverts; under the throat pale brown, gradually speckled on the lower breast with bars of whitish, each feather tipped with dark brown. The white bars increase in breadth towards the belly, which is nearly all dusky white. Thigh-coverts olivaceous; primaries black-grey, outer web rich rufous brown; wing-coverts same colour, finely tipped white; secondaries also tipped white; first four primaries grey on outer web, gradually decreasing. Tail with two centre tail-feathers rich rufous; four outer terminating in dark grey, tipped with white narrowly. Legs pale pinkish grey, strong in form. Bill black, short, and well notched. Irides umber.

"Length $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches, extent $10\frac{1}{2}$, wing 4, tail $4\frac{1}{2}$, tarsus $1\frac{1}{2}$, spread of foot $\frac{3}{4}$, bill at front '63. Found in underwood on Hengdan Peak, the principal Trigonometrical Station of Observation at the head of the Jhiri river, at a height of 7000 feet; generally seen in pairs, uttering a harsh croaking call, and answering each other from time to time."

And the following is Dr. Jerdon's original description in 'The Ibis,' also above referred to:-

"Head, nape, and sides of the neck rich rusty brown, each feather with a paler shaft; back and uropygium olive-brown, tinged with the colouring of the head, but devoid of pale shafts; middle pair of rectrices and outer edges of quills above deep rich ferruginous; remaining rectrices dark brown, tipped with pure white, the central pairs more or less edged with the colour of the middle pair. General colour of the under surface of the body similar to that of the head, but each feather terminated by an albescent border and a penultimate brown band, most prominent on the breast; ventral feathers almost entirely albescent, with narrow brown terminal edgings; under tail- and wing-coverts tawny ferruginous, the former faintly tipped with albescent; major wing-coverts and some of the tertiaries with terminal albescent drops; bill black; legs brown. Wing $3\frac{7}{8}$, tail $4\frac{7}{8}$, tarsus $1\frac{1}{16}$, bill from gape $\frac{7}{16}$. The pale central streaking of the head- and neck-plumage varies in degree in each individual."

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The sexes in all probability will not be found to differ in colour.

The Plate represents the bird in two positions, of the size of life.