IXUS SINENSIS.

Chinese Bulbul.

Le Gobe-mouche verdâtre de la Chine, Sonn. Voy. Ind. Orient., ii. p. 197.
Wreathed Flycatcher, Lath. Gen. Syn., ii. pt. 1, p. 336.
Muscicapa sinensis, Gm. S. N., i. p. 942.
Turdus occipitalis, Less. Traité d'Orn., p. 410.—Eydoux et Souleyet, Mag. de Zool. (1836), Oiseaux, pl. 66.
Pycnonotus sinensis, Blyth, J. A. S. B., xiv. p. 569.—Id. Cat. B. Mus. A. S. B., p. 210.—Horsf. & Moore, Cat. B. Mus. E. I. Co., i. p. 246.
——— *occipitalis*, Gray, Gen. B., i. p. 237.—Swinh. Ibis, 1861, p. 39.
Ixus sinensis, Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., i. p. 266.—Swinh, P. Z. S., 1871, p. 369.

If I had wished to select one of the commonest Chinese birds I probably could not have chosen a fitter subject for my Plate than the present species; but, notwithstanding that it is one which has been more than once figured, I cannot resist the opportunity of giving an illustration of the nest and young birds, with which Mr. Swinhoe has kindly furnished me; for although the species has been known for a long time (ever since the time of Sonnerat) we have only lately become thoroughly acquainted with its manners and economy.

In his last list of Chinese birds Mr. Swinhoe gives the habitat as follows:—"Luichow to Shanghai, and westward to Szechuen, also in Formosa. Shanghai samples are larger, with the black of the crown somewhat obscuring the white of the occiput; Szechuen specimens have the occiput very white, with a pale halter mark round the neck; but both these varieties occasionally occur at Amoy."

The best account of the species is that given by the Consul in 'The Ibis' for 1863, p. 289:—

"This is the commonest of the *Pycnonotidæ* in Southern China; it is said to be also very common in the Philippines, and in Formosa is our only species, being found in great abundance throughout all the low country. My specimens vary chiefly in the proportions of white and black on the head. I have one peculiar variety from Amoy. The Formosan form is essentially identical with the Chinese bird, having no special peculiarities of its own. It is, however, a bird abundant on the coasts of both the island and the main, and possesses no mean powers of flight; and, though usually resident in localities where found, there could be no difficulty in supposing it occasionally to transport itself across the channel.

"These birds subsist partly on insects, and partly on berries and small wild figs. In habits they connect the *Fringillæ* and the *Muscicapæ*, assembling, like the former, in large flocks, and flying from tree to tree in noisy concert in search of berries, and, like the latter, pursuing insects in the air. They have no habits in common with the skulking *Garrulax*, preferring rather to show themselves tame and conspicuous; no creeping from bush to bush, and chattering in low and coaxing whisper, in their case; but, perching on the tops or exposed parts of bushes and trees, they assemble and utter loud notes,—often, when so engaged, ruffling their crests, rounding the back and tail, and making the tips of their wings meet over their heads. Their notes are very varied, but strikingly peculiar, and I would try to syllable them if there was any chance of conveying to the reader an idea of their natural sounds. In April they commence nesting, but still keeping together in parties, which meet after the business of the day is over and amuse themselves till nightfall. They mostly build three nests in the course of the season, occasionally four, laying in the first nest usually five eggs, in the others that succeed three. In the interior the nest is large and deep for the size of the bird; it is usually made of grasses, lined with finer samples; but in the materials these birds are by no means particular, almost any thing they can gather, such as scraps of paper, cotton, cloth, leaves, and feathers, being added. In the site, too, they are not regular; any bush or tree, of almost any height from the ground, will serve their purpose; and in the usual choice of their position they show as little discernment as the Hedge-Sparrow (*Accentor modularis*) at home, frequently placing their nests in most exposed situations. They generally nestle in gardens close to the habitations of Chinese, and, being familiar birds, are protected. When their nest is approached they make a great chattering; but they have far less to fear from man than from Magpies and *Garrulaces*.

"Their eggs are of a purplish-white ground-colour, spotted closely and often confusedly with dark shades of brownish purple-grey. They measure ·9 by ·65 inch."

An amusing story is also related by the same gentleman (Ibis, 1870, p. 254) concerning the present species or its Hainan relative:—"The Chinese writers of some centuries back call the Hainan *Ixus* by the