

PSAROPHOLUS TRAILLI.

Maroon Oriole.

Pastor Traillii, Vig. in Proc. of Comm. of Sci. and Corr. of Zool. Soc., part i. p. 176.—Gould, Cent. of Birds, pl. xxxv.

Oriolus Traillii, Hodgs. Journ. Asiat. Soc. Beng., vol. v. p. 772.—G. R. Gray, Cat. of Spec. and Draw. of Birds pres. by B. H. Hodgson, Esq., to Brit. Mus., p. 87.—M'Clell. in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part vii. 1839, p. 160.—Blyth, Journ. Asiat. Soc. Beng., vol. xi. pp. 192 and 797, vol. xv. p. 45; Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. Calcutta, p. 215; Ibis, 1867, p. 11.—G. R. Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 232, *Oriolus*, sp. 16.—Horsf. and Moore, Cat. of Birds in Mus. East-Ind. Comp., vol. i. p. 272.—Jerd. Birds of India, vol. ii. p. 112.

Psaropholus Traillii, Jard. and Selb. Ill. Orn., 3rd ser. pl. xxvi.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av. p. 345.

Analcipus Traillii, G. R. Gray, List of Gen. of Birds, 2d edit. p. 38, and Hand-list of Birds, part i. p. 290.

THIS, one of the finest and most attractive of the Insectorial birds of the Himalayan region, is to all intents and purposes a true Oriole; yet it has been generically separated by some of our best ornithologists from the other members of the genus *Oriolus*; and in following in their wake I must admit that I am acting inconsistently with my conviction. The late Mr. Vigors regarded it as a *Pastor*, and so described it in the first part of the 'Proceedings of the Committee of Science and Correspondence of the Zoological Society;' and as such it also appeared in my 'Century of Birds.' Sir William Jardine and Mr. Selby made it the type of their genus *Psaropholus*; by Mr. Hodgson it was placed in that of *Oriolus*, rightly in my opinion; while Mr. G. R. Gray includes it in the genus *Analcipus*, of which *A. sanguinolentus* is the type, a Javan form, of which, I believe, no other species is known; if, however, as is generally admitted, *Mimeta* is separable from *Oriolus*, then, of course, *Psaropholus* is also. The solitary *Analcipus*, I consider, differs sufficiently to render a separate generic designation necessary.

It is somewhat surprising that very little has been recorded respecting the habits and economy of this bird, since it must have come under the observation of many naturalists and travellers who have visited the Himalayas; yet the following brief note by Dr. Jerdon is all I can find respecting it.

"This curiously plumaged Oriole," says this gentleman, "is found in the eastern part of the Himalayas, Nepal, and Sikhim, extending into Assam, Arrakan, and Tenasserim. It is met with at about 2000 to at least 7000 feet of elevation, generally in small flocks, keeping to high trees, and has a fine loud mellow call. Those I examined had fed upon caterpillars only."

It has not yet been ascertained whether the females assume a similar but less brilliant colouring than that of the males, or whether the birds with striated breasts are young individuals or fully adult females; in all probability the latter is the case, and my Plate represents an old bird of each sex.

The male has the head, neck, and wings of a fine glossy black; plumage of the body, both above and beneath, dark glistening maroon-red, the basal portion of the feathers white and occasionally appearing between the maroon-coloured tips; tail of a similar but very much lighter tint, the shafts yellowish white for two thirds of their length from the base; bill lively leaden blue; irides pale yellow; legs and feet lead-colour.

The female has the head and upper surface brown, darkest on the former; upper tail-coverts red, as in the male, but less bright; wings brownish black; tail red, the external feathers broadly margined externally with brown; the two central ones brown, with a streak of red down the middle of the basal portion; under surface dull white, with a stripe of dark brown down the centre of each feather, and a slight wash of maroon-red on the throat and breast; bill and feet as in the male, but not quite so clear.

"The young bird is brown above, darkest on the head, has the tail red, is of a sullied white beneath, with numerous longitudinal brown streaks; and the iris yellowish brown."—Jerdon.

The figures are of the size of life.