

DONACICOLA NIGRICEPS, Ramsay.

The Black-cheeked Finch.

Donacola nigriceps, Ramsay, Proc. Linn. Soc. N. S. W. i. p. 393 (1876).—Sharpe, Journ. Pr. Linn. Soc. xiii. p. 601 (1877), xiv. p. 688, no. 38 (1878); Ramsay, op. cit. iii. p. 289 (1879), iv. p. 100, no. 149 (1879).

Donacicola nigriceps, Salvad. Ann. Mus. Civ. Genova, xvi. p. 192, no. 9 (1880).—Id. Orn. della Papuasias &c. ii. p. 441 (1881).

THIS little Finch appears to represent in South-eastern New Guinea the *Donacicola castaneothorax* which I described from Australia, and which, according to Mr. E. P. Ramsay, occurs all over the eastern part of that continent, from New South Wales to Cape York, and is also found in the Gulf of Carpentaria, but whose place is taken in South-eastern New Guinea by the present species. It is very closely allied to *D. castaneothorax*, but may be told at a glance by its black head only slightly spotted with ashy, and still more distinctly by its entirely black cheeks. I have only seen a very few specimens from the immediate vicinity of Port Moresby, where it was procured by Mr. Octavius Stone; and I have not seen any examples from the interior of South-eastern New Guinea. Its habits and mode of life are doubtless similar to those of the other Australian Finches of the genus *Donacicola*.

Adult.—General colour above delicate burnt-sienna, with ashy shading to the feathers of the back; the rump and upper tail-coverts orange, with dusky bases to the feathers; tail-feathers pointed, dark brown with straw-yellow margins, the two centre feathers almost entirely straw-yellow; head and nape chocolate-brown, veined with streaks and spots of ashy whitish, the nape-feathers edged with the latter colour; lores, feathers above the eye, entire sides of face, and throat uniform black; fore neck and chest entirely pinkish fawn-colour, forming a large plastron, succeeded by a band of black across the lower breast; centre of the body and abdomen pure white, the flanks regularly barred with black and white; thighs and under tail-coverts black; under wing-coverts buffy white; the edge of the wing minutely barred with black and white; wing-coverts above sienna-brown; quills light brown, externally washed with sienna-brown, ashy brown below, edged with buff along the inner web. Total length 3·8 inches, culmen 0·4, wing 2, tail 1·55, tarsus 0·6.

The above description has been taken from Mr. Sharpe's account of Mr. Stone's collection; and I am indebted to the latter gentleman for the loan of the specimens from which the figures in the Plate have been drawn. They represent two adult birds, of the natural size.