

## RHAMPHOCHARIS CRASSIROSTRIS, *Salvad.*

### Stout-billed Flower-pecker.

*Rhamphocharis crassirostris*, *Salvad. Ann. Mus. Civic. Genov.* vii. p. 943 (1875).—*Id. op. cit.* xvi. p. 69 (1880).—*Id. Orn. Papuasias e delle Molucche*, ii. p. 288 (1881).—*Sharpe, Cat. Birds in Brit. Mus.* x. p. 84 (1885).

THIS is at once one of the most curious and at the same time one of the most distinct of the Meliphagine Flower-peckers, by which term we mean those aberrant forms which inhabit New Guinea, and which connect the family *Dicaeidae* with the Honey-eaters or *Meliphagidae*. It is difficult to say whether such genera as *Rhamphocharis* and its allies should be placed with the last-named family or at the end of the *Dicaeidae*, near the genera *Melanocharis* and *Pristorhamphus*. This is the view adopted by us in the 'Catalogue of Birds;' but as one of the principal characters of the *Dicaeidae* is the absence of a bastard-primary, and *Rhamphocharis* and the allied genera have a very distinct one, it is quite possible that in future re-arrangements of the family they may be left out of the *Dicaeidae* and joined to the *Meliphagidae*. In any case the genus *Rhamphocharis* must be placed near to *Pristorhamphus*, from which it differs in the form of bill and also in having the wing longer than the tail.

The present species was discovered by Dr. Beccari in the Arfak Mountains in North-western New Guinea; and the following descriptions, copied from the 'Catalogue of Birds,' are taken from the typical specimens, kindly lent to us by the Marquis Doria:—

"*Adult male* (type of species). General colour above olive-green, glossed with oil-green; wing-coverts like the back; greater wing-coverts, bastard-wing, primary-coverts, and quills dusky brown, edged with olive-green, brighter on the quills; upper tail-coverts dusky, washed with olive-green; tail-feathers blackish, edged with olive-green; lores olive dusky; edge of eyelid white; ear-coverts and cheeks light ashy, with the upper parts of the ear-coverts dusky olive; entire under surface of body pearly grey, slightly washed with pale yellow; thighs and under tail-coverts a little darker ashy; axillaries pale yellow; wings white, with a pale yellow wash; quills dusky, ashy grey along the edge of the inner web. Total length 4·6 inches, culmen 0·6, wing 2·6, tail 1·75, tarsus 0·7.

"*Adult female*. General colour above olive-brown, rather greener on the lower back, rump, and upper tail-coverts, the head and back being spotted with minute tips of yellowish white on the feathers; the scapulars olive-brown like the back, similarly tipped with tiny white spots; wing-coverts like the back, with white spots at the end; the greater coverts, bastard-wing, primary-coverts, and quills dusky brown, edged with olive-green, the inner greater coverts with a whitish spot at the ends, the margins of the primaries yellower; tail-feathers blackish, edged with olive-green, with a tiny white spot at the end of the inner web, increasing gradually in extent and forming a well-marked spot on the outer tail-feathers; an indistinct eyebrow of pale olive-brown, lores dusky; eyelid whitish brown; ear-coverts dull olive-brown, streaked with dull white; cheeks brown, mottled with white spots; under surface of body yellowish white, mottled all over with dusky-brown centres to the feathers, smaller on the throat and nearly obsolete on the abdomen; thighs ashy tinged with yellow; under tail-coverts yellowish white with dusky centres, the feathers mottled like the breast; axillaries pale yellow; under wing-coverts white slightly washed with yellow, and mottled with dark-brown bases to the feathers; quills dusky below, greyish white along the edge of the inner web. Total length 4·9 inches, culmen 0·6, wing 2·85, tail 1·85, tarsus 0·75."

The Plate represents a male and female of the natural size, and the figures have been drawn from the same pair of birds described above, lent to us by the Marquis Doria.

[R. B. S.]