

## DICÆUM ÆNEUM, Jacq. et Pucher.

### Bronze-shaded Flower-pecker.

*Dicée bronzée*, Hombr. et Jacq. Voy. Pole Sud, Atlas, pl. 22. fig. 4 (1845).

*Dicæum*, sp., Gray, Gen. B. ii. p. 100 (1847).

*Dicæum æneum*, Jacq. et Pucher. Voy. Pole Sud, texte, iii. p. 97 (1853).—Hartl. J. f. O. 1854, pp. 165, 168.—Gray, Cat. Birds Trop. Isl. Pacific Ocean, p. 10 (1859).—Id. Hand-l. B. i. p. 115, no. 1434 (1869).—Sclater, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1869, p. 118.—Salvad. Ann. Mus. Civic. Genov. xvi. p. 68 (1880).—Id. Orn. Papuasias, etc. ii. p. 281 (1881), iii. App. p. 540 (1882).

*Microchelidon ænea*, Reichenb. Handb. Spec. Orn. Scans. p. 244, Taf. 558. fig. 3797 (1853).

*Dicæum erythrothorax*, Ramsay, Proc. Linn. Soc. N. S. W. iv. p. 77 (1879, nec Less.).—Salvad. Ibis, 1880, p. 129.

THE family *Dicæidæ*, or Flower-peckers, is distributed over the greater part of the Indian and Australian regions, having a few representatives in the forests of Western Africa. They are particularly abundant in the Austro-Malayan subregion, nearly every island of the Moluccas and Papuasias having its own peculiar representative species of *Dicæum*.

The present bird is a native of Ugi, one of the Solomon Islands; and as most of the species inhabiting this Archipelago are nearly allied to others from New Guinea, it is not surprising to find that *Dicæum æneum* is a representative form of the scarlet-chested Flower-peckers found in the latter country and the neighbouring Moluccan islands. It resembles *Dicæum pectorale* of New Guinea, but is easily distinguished by the bronzy-greenish colour of the upper parts, the lighter blue-grey colour of the sides of the face, extending on to the sides of the fore neck and chest, and forming a large patch on the breast below the scarlet præpectoral spot; the flanks and sides of the body are also olive-yellow.

The following is a description of the adult male and female:—

*Adult male.* General colour above glossy oil-green, with a bronzy gloss; head like the back; sides of rump with a slight wash of olive-yellow; upper tail-coverts oily green; lesser and median wing-coverts glossy oil-green like the back; the greater coverts, bastard wing, primary-coverts, and quills blackish, externally glossed with oily green; tail-feathers greenish black; lores dull ashy grey; cheeks, ear-coverts, and sides of neck clear ashy grey, descending down the sides of the fore neck and occupying the whole of the breast; throat white, the sides of it ashy grey, blacker at the base of the malar line; a large triangular patch of scarlet occupying the whole of the fore neck; sides of breast and flanks bright olive-yellow; abdomen yellowish white; thighs ashy grey, white on their inner aspects; under tail-coverts white washed with yellow and having dusky bases; axillaries and under wing-coverts white, the edge of the wings blackish; quills blackish below, ashy white along the edge of the inner web. Total length 3·1 inches, culmen 0·45, wing 2·0, tail 1·0, tarsus 0·5.

*Adult female.* Differs from the male in wanting the scarlet patch on the fore neck, and in not having the patch of ashy grey on the breast; the throat and breast are yellowish white, with a few dusky margins to the lateral feathers of the breast; otherwise the under surface of the body is exactly like that of the male, the sides of the neck being ashy grey, descending on to the sides of the breast, and the rest of the sides of the body being bright olive-yellow; the upper surface resembles that of the male, being entirely oily or bronzy green; but there is a slight loreal streak of white, and the base of the lower mandible is pale, characters not seen in the adult male. Total length 3·25 inches, culmen 0·45, wing 1·95, tail 0·95, tarsus 0·5.

For the loan of the two specimens described above, we have been indebted to the kindness of Mr. E. P. Ramsay. The same birds are figured in the Plate, of the size of life.

[R. B. S.]