

XEROPHILA PECTORALIS, *Gould.*

Chestnut-breasted *Xerophila*.

Xerophila pectoralis, Gould, Ann. N. H. (4) viii. p. 192.

Of the many puzzling forms which Australia produces, the little genus *Xerophila* is one of the most characteristic. The present species has all the appearance of a Finch; and the coloration even approaches that of some Fringilline birds I could mention; to find, therefore, that it had been placed by systematists in the family Fringillidæ is not so very surprising. The late Mr. George Robert Gray, in his 'Hand-list of Birds' (part i. p. 235), has associated *Xerophila* with *Suthora* and *Certhiparus*. My own view of the case, as will be seen on consulting my 'Hand-book of the Birds of Australia,' is very different: notwithstanding its thick bill, I have referred the type to the *Acanthizæ*; and the discovery of the second species does not alter my opinion.

I have to express my regret that absolutely nothing has been recorded respecting this pretty little bird. I am indebted to the kindness of the Director of the South-Australian Institute at Adelaide, and to Mr. Waterhouse, for the opportunity of describing and figuring it. I reproduce the original diagnosis, published by me in 1871.

Face and throat white, passing into greyish white on the ear-coverts; crown and nape hair-brown, mottled with blackish brown, the darker tint occupying the centre of each feather; back chestnut-brown, becoming much darker and richer on the rump; upper tail-coverts hair-brown; two central tail-feathers hair-brown, with lighter edges, the five lateral feathers on each side black, tipped with white; across the chest a well-defined band of cinnamon-brown; under surface white, with a mark of chestnut down the centre of each of the flank-feathers; wings dark brown, the secondaries broadly margined with dull buff; under tail-coverts buffy white; bill and feet black.

Total length $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches; bill $\frac{3}{8}$, wing $2\frac{1}{4}$, tail $1\frac{5}{8}$, tarsi $\frac{5}{8}$.

The type specimen was procured at Port Augusta, South Australia. The figures in the Plate are of the natural size.