

## CRACTICUS RUFESCENS, *Devis.*

### Rufous Crow-Shrike.

*Cracticus rufescens*, Devis, Proc. Linn. Soc. N. S. Wales, vii. p. 562 (1883).

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For the opportunity of describing and figuring this interesting Australian bird we are indebted to the kindness of Mr. T. H. Bowyer Bower, who met with the species in Queensland. At first sight it looks like an immature bird of some of the black or pied species of *Cracticus*, and this was our impression on first reading Mr. Devis's description; but after comparing Mr. Bower's specimens with the immature birds of the other Australian *Cractici*, we find that *C. rufescens* is undoubtedly a good species.

Mr. Devis, who first described it, received his specimens from the Tully and Murray River Scrubs. Mr. Bowyer Bower met with the species in October at Gordon's Camp on the Mulgrave River, twenty-two miles from Cairns, Trinity Bay. It was the only *Cracticus* seen in the neighbourhood and was decidedly scarce.

The following descriptions are taken from an adult pair of birds procured by Mr. Bowyer Bower in Queensland and given by him to the British Museum:—

*Adult male.* General colour above light rufous, the back streaked with ochreous buff and brown, the feathers being pale in the centre and brown on the margins; upper tail-coverts pale tawny rufous; lesser wing-coverts also pale tawny; median and greater coverts blackish brown, with whitish or pale tawny ends, and a median streak of pale tawny; quills dark brown, externally marked with pale tawny rufous; tail-feathers bronzy brown, the inner webs of all but the centre feathers light rufous; crown of head, hind neck, and upper mantle black, streaked with tawny rufous, more broadly on the latter; lores, a narrow eyebrow, sides of face, and ear-coverts tawny rufous, with dusky brown edges to the feathers; cheeks and under surface of the body pale tawny buff, rather more rufous on the sides of the body, flanks, thighs, and under tail-coverts; axillaries and under wing-coverts clear tawny; quills dusky below, pale tawny along the inner web: "bill bluish lead-colour at base, passing into black at the tips; iris brown" (*T. H. Bowyer Bower*). Total length 14.25 inches, culmen 2.1, wing 6.55, tail 5.2, tarsus 1.6.

The female is a little paler and not so strongly streaked with rufous above. Total length 13 inches, culmen 2.1, wing 6.4, tail 5.1, tarsus 1.55.

The Plate represents a male and female of about the size of life, and the figures are taken from the pair in the British Museum.

[R. B. S.]