

## SERICORNIS BECCARII, *Salvad.*

### Beccari's Sericornis.

*Sericornis beccarii*, Salvad. Ann. Mus. Civic. Genov. vi. p. 79 (1874), xvi. p. 186 (1880).—Id. Orn. Papuasias, etc. p. 407 (1881).—Sharpe, Cat. Birds Brit. Mus. vii. p. 305 (1883).

THE genus *Sericornis* is mainly Australian, but some representatives of it are met with in New Guinea and the Aru Islands. The present bird is one of these, being found only in the last-named locality.

There are two sections of the genus, one in which the species have a distinct dark subterminal band on the tail-feathers, and a second in which this dark subterminal band is absent. Beccari's *Sericornis* belongs to the latter division and is closely allied to *S. frontalis*, a widely spread Australian species, but it is distinguished by having the ear-coverts dusky brown and the under tail-coverts dusky with fulvous tips.

As far as we yet know, the present species is peculiar to the Aru Islands, where it was discovered by the celebrated Italian traveller and naturalist whose name it bears.

The following description of the typical example is taken from the 'British Museum Catalogue of Birds':—

“*Adult male* (Aru Islands; Beccari: type of the species). General colour above dark olive-brown, gradually becoming more rufous-brown on the lower back and rump; the upper tail-coverts deep rusty brown; lesser wing-coverts like the back; median and greater coverts and bastard-wing feathers blackish with narrow white tips, the inner greater coverts brown; primary-coverts black; quills dusky brown, with olive edges to the primaries, the secondaries externally rusty brown; tail-feathers brown with dusky bars under certain lights, externally washed with reddish brown; crown of the head a little more dingy than the back, the forehead black, as also the lores, which are surmounted by a white streak; no eyebrow; eyelid above and below the eye white; below the eye a blackish shade; ear-coverts brown; cheeks and throat white, the feathers with narrow blackish margins and spots; remainder of the under surface of the body white slightly tinged with olive-yellow; the fore neck and chest washed with dusky; sides of the body and flanks washed with olive-brown; thighs dusky brown; under tail-coverts yellowish buff, the long ones brown with broad yellowish-buff margins; under wing-coverts dusky brown, the ones near the edge of the wing white, spotted with black; axillaries white; quills below dusky brown, inner edges ashy grey; ‘iris cinnabar-red’ (*Beccari*). Total length 7 inches, culmen 0·6, wing 2·35, tail 1·65, tarsus 0·85. (*Mus. Civic. Genov.*)”

We are indebted to the kindness of the Marquis of Doria, the director of the Civic Museum at Genoa, for the loan of the typical specimen of the present species, which is contained in the Museum under his care. The Plate represents that bird in two positions, of the natural size.

[R. B. S.]