

GEOCICHLA SCHISTACEA, *Meyer*.

Meyer's Ground-Thrush.

Geocichla schistacea, Meyer, in Madarász, Zeitschr. für Orn. i. p. 211, Taf. viii. (1884).—Forbes, Naturalist's Wanderings, p. 365 (1885).

Two specimens of this strikingly coloured Thrush were procured by Mr. Riedel's hunters in Timor-Laut, and forwarded by him to his friend Dr. Meyer. Mr. Forbes did not apparently meet with the species during his sojourn in Timor-Laut, but he obtained two specimens of a Ground-Thrush which was new to science, and which he called *Geocichla machiki*. We have had to consider whether *G. machiki* is not the female of *G. schistacea*, as it is somewhat singular that both Mr. Forbes's specimens were females and both Mr. Riedel's were males. The nearest ally of *G. schistacea* is undoubtedly *G. wardi* of Southern India; but the latter is very distinct, being black above, with a broad white eyebrow and with no white on the ear-coverts. The difference in the colour of the sexes, however, in *G. wardi* is exactly parallel to the difference between *G. schistacea* and *G. machiki*, and we should not hesitate to unite the two species were it not for the fact that the latter is so very much larger than *G. schistacea*, the measurements being so different that we have not been able to recognize a species wherein the sexes varied so markedly in size, and we have therefore come to consider that they must be really distinct.

The following is a description of the type specimen of *G. schistacea*:—

Adult male. General colour above slaty grey; lesser wing-coverts grey like the back; median and greater coverts black, rather broadly tipped with white, forming a double wing-bar; bastard-wing black, with a small white spot at the end of the outer web; primary-coverts black; quills black, externally slaty grey, lighter on the primaries, the secondaries almost entirely slaty grey; upper tail-coverts like the back; tail-feathers blackish, slaty grey externally, the outermost feathers with a white spot at the end; crown of head slaty grey like the body, the fore part of the crown and forehead black; lores black, surmounted by a broad white eyebrow; feathers round eye and below the latter black, extending on to the fore part of the ear-coverts, which are otherwise white; cheeks, throat, and fore neck black; chest and breast white, spotted with terminal spots of black; abdomen and lower breast white; sides of body pale ashy grey, the lower flanks white; thighs and under tail-coverts white; under wing-coverts white, the lower series blackish; axillaries white; quills below black, white at the base of the inner web. Total length 6·4 inches, culmen 0·85, wing 4·0, tail 2·55, tarsus 1·1.

The Plate represents an adult male of the present species in two positions, the figures being drawn from the typical example lent to us by Dr. Meyer.

[R. B. S.]