## MYIAGRA FERROCYANEA, Ramsay.

Purple-backed Flycatcher.

Myiagra ferrocyanea, Ramsay, Proc. Linn. Soc. N. S. W. iv. p. 78 (1879).—Salvad. Ann. Mus. Civ. Genov. xiv. p. 508 (1879).—Id. Ibis, 1880, p. 129.—Id. Orn. Papuasia, etc. ii. p. 79 (1881), iii. p. 533 (1882).

Myiagra pallida, Ramsay, Proc. Linn. Soc. N. S. W. iv. p. 78 (1879).—Salvad. Ann. Mus. Civ. Genov. xiv. p. 508 (1879).—Id. Ibis, 1880, p. 129.—Id. Orn. Papuasia, etc. ii. p. 79 (1881).

On comparing the male of the present species with its allies, it will be found at once to be very distinct by reason of its purple back. The female was described by Mr. Ramsay as a distinct species (M. pallida), although he appears to have entertained doubts at the time whether it might not be the hen bird of a black-throated male. We have no hesitation in adopting the latter view, although, according to some observers, it would be quite possible to have two species, as dissimilar as the sexes of the present bird, living side by side in the same island. Where a black-throated male occurs, however, along with a red-throated bird, we believe that the latter will be found to be the female, and that it is only in certain islands that both sexes are red- or white-throated. The nearest approach to the coloration of the females of M. ferrocyanea occurs in M. cervinicauda of Tristram; but here the rufous on the chin and under surface of body at once distinguishes them.

The following descriptions are taken from the original specimens lent to us by Mr. Ramsay:—

Adult male (type of Myiagra ferrocyanea, Ramsay). General colour above deep purplish, the head, which is much crested, being more of a deep steel-blue colour; wing-coverts purple like the back; bastard wing, primary-coverts, and quills blackish brown, narrowly edged with blue-black; upper tail-coverts blue-black, not so purple as the back; tail-feathers blue-black; lores velvety black; sides of face, ear-coverts, cheeks, sides of neck, throat, and fore neck deep purple, inclining to steel-blue on the throat; remainder of under surface from the chest downwards and including the thighs, under tail-coverts, axillaries, and under wing-coverts pure white; quills dusky below, white along the edge of the inner web. Total length 5·3 inches, culmen 0·55, wing 2·75, tail 2·5, tarsus 0·65.

Adult female (type of Myiagra pallida, Ramsay). General colour above pale reddish brown, with an ashy shade on the scapulars and lower back, as well as the lesser wing-coverts; median and greater coverts, bastard wing, primary-coverts, and quills dusky brown, externally edged with light rufous, the margins nearly obsolete on the bastard-wing and primary-coverts; upper tail-coverts light rufous; tail-feathers pale brown, externally edged with pale rufous, the outer feathers almost entirely pale rufous, dusky brown towards the tips and along the outer webs; crown of head, hind neck, and mantle French grey; lores and eyelid whitish; feathers below the eye and ear-coverts French grey; cheeks and entire under surface of body white, faintly shaded with fulvous on the fore neck; lower flanks, thighs, and under tail-coverts washed with pale rufous; axillaries and under wing-coverts white; quills dusky brown below, pale rufescent along the edge of the inner web. Total length 5:3 inches, culmen 0:55, wing 2:55, tail 2:45, tarsus 0:55.

The figures in the Plate represent the two sexes of the size of life, and are drawn from the types of M. ferrocyanea and M. pallida respectively.

[R. B. S.]