

## MICRÆCA ASSIMILIS, *Gould.*

### Western Microæca.

- Microæca assimilis*, Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1840, p. 172.—Id. B. Austr. Intr. p. xl (1848).—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av. i. p. 321 (1850).—Reichenbach, Vög. Neuholl. p. 287 (1850).—Cab. Mus. Hein. Th. i. p. 52 (1850).—Gould, Handbook B. Austr. i. p. 260 (1856).—Ramsay, Proc. Linn. Soc. New South Wales, ii. part 2, p. 182 (1878).—Sharpe, Cat. B. Brit. Mus. iv. p. 124 (1879).  
*Myiagra assimilis*, Gray, Gen. of Birds, i. p. 261.  
*Muscicapa assimilis*, Gray, Hand-list of Birds, i. p. 324, no. 4856 (1869).

THE genus *Microæca* was instituted by me in 1840 for the reception of the present bird and the *M. fascinans* of Latham, also an Australian species. Since that time only two or three species have been discovered in the Papuan Islands and North-eastern Australia; so that in *Microæca* we have a thoroughly Australian genus of Flycatchers, representing the true Flycatchers of Europe and Asia. It may be noticed that the two best-known Australian species, *Microæca fascinans* and *M. assimilis*, in their sober brown coloration are not unlike the Common Flycatcher (*Butalis grisola*) of England.

The present species very closely resembles *M. fascinans* of New South Wales, of which it is the representative in Western Australia; but it is smaller, and, instead of having the outer tail-feathers pure white, has only the tip of the inner web and the outer edge of the external tail-feather white.

The species is described in full by Mr. Sharpe, whose words I here transcribe:—

“*Adult male.* General colour above earthy brown, the upper tail-coverts darker sepia-brown; wing-coverts brown; quills brown, narrowly edged with lighter brown, the secondaries with dull white; four centre tail-feathers dark brown, the next two on each side tipped with white on the inner web, the white tip gradually increasing in size towards the outermost, which has also the outer web white; a narrow frontal line of dull white drawn backwards over the fore part of the eye; in front of the eye a dusky spot; ear-coverts brown with a slight dash of rufous; cheeks, throat, abdomen and under tail-coverts white, the chest slightly shaded with light brown, the sides of the body more distinctly light earthy brown; axillaries pale rusty brown; under wing-coverts whity brown, with dusky bases; bill and feet bluish brown; iris reddish brown. Total length 4·5 inches, culmen 0·45, wing 3·35, tail 2·25, tarsus 0·55.”

The female is similar to the male.

Mr. Sharpe also notices a specimen from North-western Australia, collected by Mr. Elsey, in which there are small white spots at the tips of the primary-coverts. These he believes to be a sign of immaturity.

All the specimens which have as yet come under my notice have been from Western Australia; but Mr. Ramsay also gives the Gulf of Carpentaria as a habitat for the species. I have never seen it from anywhere but Western Australia.

The figures in the Plate represent this species of the natural size, and are drawn from skins in my own collection. There is no difference in the sexes.