

## Genus MICROURA, Gould.

### CHARACTERES GENERICI.

Rostrum longitudine caput æquans, ferè rectum, acuminatum, gracile et lateralitèr compressum, gonyde levitèr incurvato. Nares basales lineares, et operculo tectæ. Setæ basales desunt. Ales brevissimæ, molles, concavæ, et rotundatæ, primariis, quartis, quintis, et sextis longissimis et inter se æqualibus. Cauda condita, mollis. Tarsi elongati, graciles, læves; digito posteriore, cum ungue, magno et robusto, digitumque medium quoad longitudinem æquante; digitis anterioribus gracilibus, et unguibus parvis instructis; digitis lateralibus brevioribus et æqualibus. Plumæ corporis, densæ, molles, et sericæ. Color fuscus.

## MICROURA SQUAMATA, Gould.

### Scaly-breasted Little-tail.

*Mic. corpore superiore intensè fusco levitèr olivaceo tincto; lateribus capitis flavescente fusco guttatis nec non tectricibus alarum corporisque lateribus, at pallidiis; gula, pectore, abdomineque fuscis singulis plumis albido marginatis, squamasque fingentibus, rostro intensè fusco, tarsis pedibusque brunnescenti-carneis.*

*In altero specimine margines plumarum gutturalium et abdominalium, qui in priore albidè, fulvum colorem ostendunt.*

Long. tot.  $3\frac{7}{8}$  unc.; rostri,  $\frac{5}{8}$ ; alæ,  $2\frac{3}{8}$ ; tarsi, 1.

General colour of the upper surface deep brown, slightly tinged with olive; sides of the head spotted with yellowish brown, as are also some of the wing-coverts and the flanks, but more faintly; feathers of the throat, chest, and belly dark brown edged with greyish white, giving to these parts a scaly appearance; bill dark brown; feet and legs light flesh brown.

In a second specimen the colouring is precisely the same, with the exception that those parts of the under-surface which are greyish white in the above are of a rich tawny brown.

*Microura squamata*, Gould, in Proc. of Zool. Soc. Part V. 1837.

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THIS curious little bird is almost tailless, this organ being so slightly developed that it consists of merely the rudiments of a few weak downy feathers scarcely one-fourth of an inch in length. Besides my own specimens, which were received from the Himalaya, I have examined two others from Nepâl, all of which were alike in the rudimentary nature of the tail-feathers; I am consequently led to believe that this character is permanent and have named it accordingly. The accompanying plate represents the bird in two different states of plumage, which in all probability are indicative of a difference of sex, as both specimens appear to have arrived at maturity and to have been preserved at the same time. The great length of its tarsi, and the rounded and concave form of its wings, at once indicate its partiality to the ground. Its plumage is thick, soft, and silky, a covering admirably adapted for an inhabitant of dense underwood, beneath the canopy of which it in all probability is an habitual resident.

The specimens from which the figures are taken have lately been added to the fine collection of the Zoological Society of London.

Habitat, the Himalaya Mountains and Nepâl.

The figures are of the natural size.