



RUFOUS SCRUB BIRDS.

Top Fig.—Female. *Atrichornis r. jacksoni* (H. L. White).
Centre Fig.—Male. *Atrichornis r. jacksoni* (H. L. White).
Bottom Fig.—Male. *Atrichornis rufescens* (Ramsay).

(Figures Four-Fifths Natural Size.)

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The Rufous Scrub-Bird (*Atrichornis rufescens*) in Queensland. A new Sub-species.

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WHEN, during last year, Mr. A. H. Chisholm, R.A.O.U., of *The Daily Mail*, Brisbane, reported the Scrub-Bird in Southern Queensland, I felt anxious to investigate the matter. The locality mentioned by Mr. Chisholm is on the northern side of the Macpherson Range, which forms part of the boundary between New South Wales and Queensland.

The Queensland Government, thanks to Mr. Chisholm's good offices, issued a special permit to search for and secure a pair of the birds for scientific purposes.

Mr. Sid. W. Jackson, who knows more about the habits of the *Atrichornis* than anyone else, and who had already taken two sets of eggs in New South Wales, was despatched to the locality with instructions to secure the female bird at all costs. Mr. Jackson's article in this issue narrates his successful hunt for the female *Atrichornis*, while I shall endeavour to describe what I consider to be a good new sub-species, the female of which is the *first* of that sex recorded for the species.

According to agreement, I obtained, upon loan, from the "H. L. White Ornithological Collection," National Museum, Melbourne, its series of skins; these, added to a few I had retained, made probably the finest series of skins of the species in existence, embracing specimens from the Bellinger, Clarence, and Richmond River districts. Upon the skins being arranged in the order of their localities, little or no difference is observed in the New South Wales skins, but the Macpherson Range male birds show out at once; scarcely any cinnamon rufous can be noticed on the upper parts of the Queensland birds, this colour being replaced by a darker (chestnut) brown, uniform from head to tail, while the wings are decidedly darker. On the under surface the Queensland specimens again show less cinnamon-rufous, while the black patches on either side of the breast are much more distinct.

The throat of the Queensland bird is distinctly barred, a close examination proving that the feathers are blackish, edged with white, giving the appearance of scales; the scaled area extending well down towards the breast.

It is in the bill, however, that the greatest difference exists. Though rather shorter and stouter, the New South Wales specimens are all very slightly hooked at the tip, while the Northern form possesses a well-defined bend.

The female, the first described, and therefore the *type*, is much smaller than the male, as the measurements which follow will show; the coloration on the back is similar, but differs materially on under parts. The whitish-coloured throat and black breast patches are absent, the whole under-surface being a uniform rufous-brown or cinnamon-rufous. Following are the measurements in millimetres taken in the flesh:—

Male.—Total length, 183; wing, 67; bill, 20; tarsus, 19.

Female.—Total length, 160; wing, 55; bill, 17½; tarsus, 18.

For this distinct sub-species I suggest the name *Atrichornis rufescens jacksoni*.*

Mr. G. M. Mathews, F.R.S.E., on page 71, vol. iii., of the *Austral Avian Record*, mentions *Atrichornis r. tweedi* as occurring on the Tweed River, but his description is so extremely vague—viz., "darker below and lighter above than *Atrichornis rufescens*"—that I am quite unable to identify it; my Richmond River birds by no stretch of imagination may be made to conform with Mr. Mathews's description of *Atrichornis r. tweedi*.

Haunts of the Rufous Scrub-Bird (*Atrichornis rufescens*, Ramsay).—Discovery of the Female on the Macpherson Range, S.-E. Queensland.

By SIDNEY WILLIAM JACKSON, R.A.O.U.

DURING last September I arrived at the elevated scrubs of the Macpherson Range (forming part of the boundary of Queensland and New South Wales) in South-East Queensland, and there pitched camp at an elevation of over 3,000 feet, and in a direct line about 30 miles from the ocean.

This ornithological expedition was carried out by me on behalf of Mr. Henry L. White, of Belltrees, Scone, New South Wales, chiefly for the purpose of procuring the hitherto unknown female of the interesting and unique Rufous Scrub-Bird above mentioned. The Queensland Government kindly supplied me with a permit under which I was allowed to collect a pair of the birds in the interests of science.

* Unless under exceptional circumstances, I am strongly opposed to naming birds after persons; the practice, in many instances, being reduced to an absurdity. In the present case, however, I consider Mr. S. W. Jackson deserves all the honour that can be shown him. For very many years he studied the *Atrichornis*, and is our best authority upon this little-known bird; therefore, the name of Jackson should always be associated with *Atrichornis rufescens*.