

# AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

North, A. J., 1904. Description of a new species of *Poephila*. *Records of the Australian Museum* 5(4): 263–264. [16 June 1904].

doi:10.3853/j.0067-1975.5.1904.1061

ISSN 0067-1975

Published by the Australian Museum, Sydney

nature culture **discover**

Australian Museum science is freely accessible online at  
<http://publications.australianmuseum.net.au>  
6 College Street, Sydney NSW 2010, Australia



DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SPECIES OF *PŒPHILA*.

By ALFRED J. NORTH, C.M.B.O.U., C.M.Z.S., Ornithologist.

*PŒPHILA NEGLECTA*, *sp. nov.*

*Adult male*.—General colour above rich cinnamon-brown, slightly darker on the lower back; rump black; upper tail-coverts black, some of the longer feathers margined with white at the tips; upper wing-coverts brown, the lesser and median series washed with cinnamon-brown, the greater series indistinctly edged with cinnamon-brown; quills brown with a dusky wash which is more distinct towards the tips of the primaries, and on the innermost secondaries; tail black; head ashy-grey; lores black; cheeks and ear-coverts pearl grey, the plumes of the latter of a silky texture; throat velvety-black, remainder of the under surface rich cinnamon-brown; lower portion of the abdomen black; lower flank feathers black tipped with white; under tail-coverts dull white; bill black. Total length 3·8 inches, wing 2·4, tail 1·5, bill 0·4, tarsus 0·6.

*Hab.*—Queensland?

*Type.*—In the Australian Museum.

*Remarks.*—The distinctly darker under surface of *Pœphila neglecta*, is sufficient to distinguish it from any other cinnamon-coloured ally of the genus. Its nearest ally is *Pœphila atropygialis* (Diggles), Castlenau and Ramsay. From that species, however, it may be distinguished by its darker upper and under parts, and by having the longer black upper tail-coverts margined with white at the tips. Vernacularly it may be known as the Cinnamon-coloured Grass-Finch.

The above description is taken from a specimen received by the Trustees in June, 1877, from Mr. J. A. Thorpe. In the Old Register, the locality is recorded as Macquarie River, New South Wales. Unless an escaped cage-bird, which it does not appear to be, as it is in perfect plumage, the locality given is undoubtedly an error.

*Pœphila atropygialis*, was described as a new species by the late Comte de Castlenau and Dr. E. P. Ramsay in the Proceedings of the Linnean Society of New South Wales in 1877.<sup>1</sup> The type

<sup>1</sup> Castlenau & Ramsay—Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S. Wales, i., 4, 1877, p. 382.

measures: total length 4.2 inches, wing 2.35, tail 1.6, bill 0.4, tarsus 0.6. There are three specimens in the Reference Collection; all were obtained by Mr. T. A. Gulliver at the mouth of the Norman River, Gulf of Carpentaria. In a footnote to their description of *Pephila atropygialis*, Comte de Castlenau and Dr. Ramsay make the following remarks:—"Diggles, *Queenslander* newspaper, 1876. We have adopted the name proposed by Mr. Diggles, of Queensland, for this new species, but more out of compliment to that gentleman than in accordance with the strict rules of nomenclature, as it will be evident to all ornithologists that the merely proposing a name and pointing out a difference in a newspaper can scarcely be looked upon as *describing the species*. We trust our friend will take this hint in the kindly spirit it is meant, and when he again favours us with the announcement of any new species, we hope they will be *fully described*."

Mr. E. Hartert in describing *Pephila nigrotecta*<sup>2</sup> from Cape York compares it with *P. cincta*, which has white upper tail-coverts, instead of *P. atropygialis*. Judging by the description, it does not differ from the latter species.

---

<sup>2</sup> Hartert—Bull. Brit. Orn. Club, (*Ibis*, 1899, p. 647.)