

DESCRIPTION OF THE FEMALE, WITH NEST AND EGGS
OF THE CINNAMON-CHESTED GROUND THRUSH.

(*Cinclosoma marginatum*, SHARPE).

By ALFRED J. NORTH, C.M.B.O.U., C.F.A.O.U., Ornithologist.

(Plate xcii.)

In July, 1908, the Trustees of the Australian Museum received the skin of an adult female of *Cinclosoma marginatum*, Sharpe, from Mr. Chas. G. Gibson, Assistant Government Geologist of Western Australia. It was procured the previous month at Wiluna, Western Australia, where Mr. Gibson was also successful in finding the nest and eggs of this species, which he photographed, and will be found reproduced on the accompanying plate.

Cinclosoma marginatum was described by Dr. R. Bowdler Sharpe from a single adult male skin, obtained by the late Mr. J. R. Elsey in North-western Australia. Owing to Mr. Gibson's absence during nearly the whole of the latter half of 1908 with the party engaged on the survey of the proposed Trans-Continental Railway-line between Western Australia and South Australia, the eggs on loan for description, and the information relative to the taking of them, have only been recently received.

CINCLOSOMA MARGINATUM, *Sharpe*.

Adult female.—General colour above rich cinnamon brown, the scapulars and upper tail-coverts slightly darker and having narrow indistinct blackish shaft-streaks; the inner series of the upper wing-coverts like the back, the outer series black largely tipped with white, some of the outer greater coverts strongly washed with rich cinnamon-brown; quills dark brown, the middle of the outer webs of the primaries edged with white, tinged with cinnamon-brown; the secondaries broadly margined with rich cinnamon-brown; central pair of tail-feathers rich cinnamon-brown, the apical portion brownish near the shaft, the remainder black largely tipped with white; forehead, crown of the head, nape and sides of the neck brown, with a faint cinnamon wash; lores blackish; ear-coverts dark brown; stripe over the eye

reaching on to the sides of the nape, the chin and throat light cinnamon-brown, the fore neck a slightly clearer brown; remainder of the under surface rich cinnamon-brown; down the centre of the breast and the abdomen a broad irregular whitish streak reaching to the vent; thighs pale brown with darker brown centres to the feathers; under tail-coverts rich cinnamon-brown, with a sub-apical blackish streak and a whitish tip or margin which is confined chiefly to the inner web; the longest coverts much darker than those just below the vent; bill (of skin) black; legs and feet brownish black. Total length 9.25 inches, wing 3.6, tail 4.2, bill 0.6, tarsus 1.1.

Locality.—Wiluna, Western Australia.

Remarks.—The female of the Cinnamon-chested Ground Thrush may be readily distinguished from that of any other species of *Cinclosoma* inhabiting Australia, by the almost uniform rich cinnamon-brown colour of the upper and under parts.

Mr. Gibson writes:—“*Cinclosoma marginatum* is found in Western Australia, north of Lat. 30° S., south of this it is replaced by *C. castanotum*. It is fairly common in the central districts north of this, but not numerous, very shy, and is usually found on stony ridges or stony flats. This species prefers running to flying, unless flushed suddenly from under a bush in the hot weather, and then it flies low and fast with a wavy flight. It has a plaintive whistling call which it occasionally utters when perched on a low limb usually of a dead tree; this note is very hard to locate when any distance off.

“The nests are similar to those of other species of *Cinclosoma*, and two eggs are laid for a sitting. They are placed on stony ground in exposed positions, or under small bushes, one was under a salt bush six inches high. I took them with eggs on the 13th June, 30th August and 1st September, 1908. The photograph of the nest and eggs of *C. marginatum* is that of the one taken at Wiluna, Lake Way, on the 13th June, 1908, and the skin of the female sent you I shot a day or two later, and may have belonged to it.”

The nest is an open cup-shaped structure formed throughout principally of thin strips of dead bark, with which is intermingled a few dried grasses and plant stems. Outwardly it is irregularly constructed, the inner cup measuring three inches and a half in diameter by two inches and a quarter in depth.

The eggs are two in number for a sitting, varying in shape and size even in the same set. Of those taken at Wiluna on

the 13th June, 1908, one is a slightly swollen oval, the other being more elongated and pointed at the smaller end—as will be seen on the accompanying plate—the shell being close-grained, smooth and lustrous. They are of a dull white ground colour, over which is distributed numerous freckles, small irregular shaped spots, and a few larger blurred markings of different shades of brown, intermingled with a few underlying spots of dull bluish-grey. In the smaller specimen the markings are slightly more thickly and evenly disposed; in the other there is a tendency to form an irregular zone at the larger end; many of the markings are penumbral or partially overlie one another. Length—(A) 1·02 x 0·77 inches; (B) 1·13 x 0·8 inches. Another set of two taken by Mr. Gibson at Lake Way, Western Australia, on the 19th August, 1906, are thickly spotted over the entire surface of the shell with different shades of brown and wood-brown, and intermingled with a few superimposed and underlying markings of pale violet-grey. Length—(A) 1·18 x 0·8 inches; (B) 1·17 x 0·8 inches.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE XCII.

Nest and Eggs of the Cinnamon-chested Ground Thrush (*Cinlosoma marginatum*).



C. G. GIBSON, photo.