

MYZOMELA ERYTHROCEPHALA, *Gould.*

Red-headed Honey-eater.

Myzomela erythrocephala, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part VII. p. 144.

THE Red-headed Honey-eater is so distinctly marked as almost to preclude the possibility of its being confounded with any known species of the genus. In size it rather exceeds the common Sanguineous Honey-eater, but is far more diminutive than the species described by Latham as inhabiting the Isle of Tanna, under the name of *Certhia Cardinalis*.

The northern portion of Australia would appear to be the true habitat of the bird here represented, all the specimens that have come under my notice having been procured at Port Essington, where it is exclusively confined to the extensive beds of mangroves bordering the inlets of the sea. From the flowers of these trees it collects its favourite food, which, like that of the other species of the group, consists of insects and honey. It is a most active little creature, flitting from one cluster of flowers to another, and from branch to branch with the greatest rapidity, uttering at the same time its rather sharp and harsh chirrup. Mr. Gilbert states that it is far from being abundant, and is so seldom seen near the settlement that no examples had been procured prior to his visit.

The sexes present the usual difference in the smaller size and sombre colouring of the female.

No information whatever was acquired respecting its nidification, nor whether it be migratory or not.

The male has the head and rump scarlet, the remainder of the plumage deep chocolate-brown; irides reddish brown; bill olive-brown, becoming much lighter on the lower mandible; legs and feet olive-grey.

The female is uniform brown above, lighter beneath.

The Plate represents two males and a female of the natural size.