PICA ERYTHORHYNCHA.

3/4 Nat. Size.

TAB. XLI.

PICA ERYTHORHYNCHA.

Of all the species composing the genus *Pica*, no one exceeds the present either in the beauty of its plumage or in the grace of its proportions. It is, however, by far the least typical of the genus to which it is provisionally assigned, differing in the strength and direction of the beak, as well as in the formation of the tail, which consists of graduated feathers, the two middle ones exceeding the rest by more than half their length. In its habitat it is not limited to the Himalayan mountains, whence the specimen figured and described was received, but extends over the whole of China. It is often accurately figured in the Chinese drawings imported into Europe; so that we suspect it to be a bird which, like our Jay or Magpie, is often kept domesticated. We have reason to suppose that this species is fierce and tyrannical. Mr. Shore, from whose manuscript notes we have derived no little information, states that one which he kept in captivity, though it refused other food, ferociously pounced upon living birds, presented to it by way of experiment, and eagerly devoured them. Seen among the foliage of the trees, it is recorded as forming an elegant and conspicuous object, flitting from bough to bough, with long and flowing tail, and full of vivacity in every movement.

The occiput and back of the neck are dull white; the head, sides of the neck and breast black; the back, wings and tail lively blue, the quill- and tail-feathers being tipped with white, those of the tail having a bar of black before the white; the under surface is white; the bill bright orange; the tarsi rather paler.

The Plate represents the species two thirds of its natural size.

Gould, John. 1831. "Pica erythrorhyncha [Tab. XLI]." *A century of birds from the Himalaya Mountains* –. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.323588>.

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