

MYIAGRA FLYCATCHER IN THE EVERARD RANGES

K. S. SHURCLIFF

Accepted January, 1977

On April 12, 1976, a female-type flycatcher of the *Myiagra* genus was observed in the Everard Ranges, north-western South Australia. The bird was seen approximately 1 km north of Victory Well at the base of one of the large granitic domes which characterize the Everards. It was also seen the following day at the same location, but was not seen subsequently. It was perched and hawking insects from the branches of several flowering Ironwood trees *Acacia estrophiolata*, 8-10 m tall. These trees were part of an open woodland vegetation with an understory of tussock grasses and scattered shrubs.

The bird was identified as a flycatcher on the basis of its general body and head shape and its characteristic tail-shivering. Other distinguishing features recorded in field notes were a rusty brown throat and breast, this colour extending an estimated 1 cm below the level of the shoulder. The demarcation between the breast colour and upper abdomen was sharp. The underparts, abdomen, flanks, and undertail coverts, were white. The upperparts, including the head and tail, were dark grey, noted as being "closer to black than brown", with lighter edge markings on the secondaries, tertiaries and outside tail feathers. Eyes, beak, and legs were dark. The lower half of the eye ring was white. Bristles were prominent at the base of the bill. The bird gave only a single call, consisting of two whistling notes.

On the basis of these field notes, it would seem that the individual was either a female-type Satin Flycatcher *Myiagra cyanoleuca* or a

female-type Leaden Flycatcher *M. rubecula*. Unfortunately, I have had no previous field experience with either of these flycatchers. On the basis of examination of specimens in the S.A. Museum, the bird is more likely to be a Satin Flycatcher. The Satin is larger, darker in back colour, with the light wing and tail markings being more conspicuous than in the Leaden. The Satin museum specimens have a darker reddish breast colour which is sharply demarcated from the upper abdomen, while the Leaden specimens are much paler, being more of a cinnamon colour. Contrary to the descriptions in both Slater (1974. *Field guide to Australian birds. Passerines.*) and Officer (1969. *Australian flycatchers and their allies.*), the extent of colour is, if anything, greater in the Satin than in the Leaden specimens, but the colour can extend below shoulder level in both species. At least one specimen of the Satin has a partial white eye ring.

The known distribution of these two species is restricted to the forests and woodlands of the eastern and northern coasts of the continent (Slater, 1974). However, there have been recent sightings of the Satin Flycatcher in the southern part of the state (N. Reid *et al.*, forthcoming) and the Leaden Flycatcher has been recorded in Adelaide (Paton, 1965. *Emu*, 64: 320). To date, no sightings of either species have been recorded for the northern part of the State.

Geography Dept., University of Adelaide.