

LOPHOPHAPS LEUCOGASTER, *Gould.*

White-bellied Bronzewing.

I ADMIT that the propriety of describing and figuring this very lovely Pigeon as distinct from *Lophophaps plumifera* is somewhat questionable; but when I reflect upon the difference which I find to exist between the two birds, and how distant are their respective homes, I cannot regard them otherwise. The *L. plumifera* inhabits the neighbourhood of the Victoria River, where six or eight were shot by the late Mr. Elsey; Mr. Bynoe also found it in the country between Cape Hotham and Depuch Island; and Gilbert met with it in lat. 17°, while journeying with Dr. Leichardt from Brisbane to Port Essington. Now all these localities are far away from South Australia, whence the specimens here represented came; moreover the two individuals from which the opposite figures were taken are far more beautiful than those represented in vol. v. pl. 69 under the name of *Geophaps plumifera*; but even should it ultimately prove that the two birds are identical, and that I have encumbered science with a name which, in that case, must descend into the rank of a synonym, I feel that I shall be excused for giving additional figures of such lovely objects. The specimens from which they were taken were sent to this country by Mr. Galbraith, of Machrihanish Station, South Australia, and are now in the possession of his sister, Mrs. Craufuird, of Budleigh Salterton, Devon. The question is, Are there two or three species of these charming little crested Pigeons?—the *L. ferruginea*, of the extreme western part of the country, the *L. plumifera*, of its northern portions, and the *L. leucogaster*, of South Australia? If so, the latter is probably the bird seen by Captain Sturt, during his arduous travels in that country, who states:—

“It was on the return of my party from the eastern extremity of Cooper’s Creek, that we first saw and procured specimens of this beautiful little bird. Its locality was entirely confined to about thirty miles along the banks of the creek in question; it was generally perched on some rock fully exposed to the sun’s rays, and evidently taking a pleasure in basking in the tremendous heat. It was very wild, and took wing on hearing the least noise. In the afternoon it was seen running in the grass on the creek-side, and could hardly be distinguished from a Quail. It never perched on the trees; when it dropped after rising from the ground, it could seldom be flushed again, but ran with such speed through the grass as to elude our search.”

One of the principal differences between the present bird and the *L. plumifera* is the whiteness of its breast, and another the brightness of the rayed markings of its upper surface; it is also a somewhat larger bird. My figures, which accurately represent it of the size of life, render a detailed description unnecessary.