

POLYTELIS ALEXANDRÆ, Gould.

The Princess of Wales's Parrakeet.

Polytelis alexandræ, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc. 1863, p. 232.

Polytelis alexandræ, Gould, Handb. Birds of Aust., vol. ii. p. 32.

I FEEL assured that the discovery of an additional species of the lovely genus *Polytelis* will be hailed with pleasure by all ornithologists, and that they will readily assent to its bearing the specific name of *Alexandræ*, in honour of the princess destined, we trust, at some future time to be the queen of these realms and their dependencies, of which Australia is by no means the least important.

The *Polytelis Alexandræ* is in every respect a typical example of its genus, having the delicate bill and lengthened tail characteristic of the other species of that form. About the same size as *P. Barrabandi*, it differs from that species in having the crown blue and the lower part of the cheeks rose-pink, instead of yellow.

For my knowledge of this new species I am indebted to the Board of Governors of the South Australian Institute, who liberally forwarded to me a series of the birds procured by Mr. Frederick G. Waterhouse during the late Mr. Stuart's exploratory expedition into Central Australia. The locality on the label attached to the specimens was, "Howell's Ponds, lat. 16° 54' 7" S."

The extremely delicate tints which pervade the plumage of this new bird render it conspicuously different from all other Australian Parrakeets that have yet become known to us; and I cannot believe that one will be discovered more fitting to bear the name of an illustrious lady as a specific designation. Its acquisition tends to prove that many fine species, of which we previously had no conception, inhabit the unexplored parts of the great continent of Australia, and that other novelties will from time to time be discovered as the interior of the country becomes accessible to the settler and the naturalist; hence it is that so much interest attaches to the journeys made by the pioneers of civilization, particularly when they have associated with them such a naturalist as Mr. Waterhouse. Surely, then, it is not too much to hope that, in all future explorations undertaken by the authorities of the colonies, zoological science will receive that degree of attention which its importance demands. At present all we know respecting this interesting bird is, that, like the other species of its genus, it is numerous in its own area; but the extent of that area is yet to be ascertained, as is also a knowledge of its habits and economy; these latter, however, are doubtless very similar to those of its near allies, *Polytelis Barrabandi* and *P. melanura*.

Forehead delicate light blue; lower part of the cheeks, chin, and throat rose-pink; head, nape, mantle, back, and scapularies olive-green; lower part of the back and rump blue; shoulders and wing-coverts pale yellowish green; external webs of the principal primaries dull blue; breast and abdomen olive-grey; thighs rosy-red; upper tail-coverts olive, tinged with blue; two centre tail-feathers bluish olive-green, the two next on each side olive-green on their outer webs and dark brown on their inner ones; the remaining tail-feathers tricoloured, the central portion being black, the outer olive-grey, and the inner deep rosy-red; bill coral-red; feet mealy-brown.

The figures, which are of the natural size, were taken from the individuals mentioned above, and which, having been duly returned, doubtless now form part of the collection of the South Australian Institute at Adelaide.