

PUFFINURIA URINATRIX.

Diving Petrel.

- Procellaria Urinatrix*, Lath. Ind. Orn., vol. ii. p. 827.—Gmel. Edit. Linn. Syst. Nat., vol. i. p. 560.
Haladroma Urinatrix, Ill. Prodrum, p. 274.—Temm. Man. d'Orn., Part I. p. cix.—Swains. Class. of Birds, vol. ii. p. 373.—Temm. Pl. Col., 517.
Diving Petrel, Lath. Gen. Syn., vol. vi. p. 413.—Forst. Voy., vol. i. pp. 189, 483, 503.—Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. x. p. 194.
Procellaria tridactyla, Forst. Drawings, No. 88.—Lichtenstein's Edit. of Forst. MSS., p. 149.
Diving Halodrome (*Halodroma urinatrix*), Steph. Cont. of Shaw's Gen. Zool., vol. xiii. p. 257.
Puffinuria Garnotii, Less. Zool. de la Voy. de Coq., pl. 46.—Ib. Traité d'Orn., p. 615.
Pelecanoïdes, Lacép.
Pelecanoïdes Urinatrix, Cuv.—G. R. Gray, Gen. of Birds, 2nd Edit., p. 98.
Tee-tee, Aborigines of New Zealand.
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I OBSERVED that this curious little bird was very abundant in Storm Bay, and off many parts of the coast of Van Diemen's Land; I have also seen specimens from New Zealand and Cape Horn which were identical with those I procured in the localities above-mentioned. As might be supposed from its structure, the habits and economy of the Diving Petrel are totally different from those of all the other members of the family, with the exception of course of the one or two other species belonging to the same genus. It possesses none of those great powers of flight common to the rest of the family, but has this loss amply compensated for by its powers of diving, which are so great that it is even said to fly under water. It thus gives chase to shrimps and other small crustaceans, fry of fish, &c., upon which it feeds; and in turn finds a destroying enemy in the Barracoota, a ravenous fish so called by the colonists, and which is very common in the seas off the southern parts of Australia. Its flight is a curious fluttering motion, performed so close to the surface that it rarely rises high enough to top the waves, but upon being met by them makes progress by a direct course through instead of over them. Latham states that it inhabits "Queen Charlotte's Sound, and other parts adjacent to New Zealand in vast flocks; fluttering on the surface of the water or sitting upon it, and dives well; rising often at considerable distances, with amazing agility. It croaks like a frog and sometimes makes a noise like the cackling of a hen."

In external appearance the Diving Petrel so much resembles the Little Auk of the northern seas, that at the first glance it might be readily mistaken for that species; their resemblance, however, is merely that of analogy or representation and not of affinity, for they are by no means nearly allied, but merely represent each other in the respective families to which they belong. I observed this or a nearly allied species about 20 degrees to the eastward of New Zealand, taking mollusks from the surface of the ocean, now and then dashing under water, rising again, skimming close to the surface and then flying off in a straight line with a quick fluttering motion of the wings.

It appears to differ considerably in colour, some having the under surface washed with dark grey, while in others, and by far the greater number, that part of the plumage is white.

Head, all the upper surface, wings and tail shining black; ear-coverts, sides of the neck and flanks dark grey; all the under surface white; irides very dark greyish brown; base of the cutting edge of the upper mandible and a line along the lower edge of the under mandible blue grey; tarsi and toes beautiful light blue; webs transparent bluish white, tinged with brown; naked pouch hanging from the chin nearly black, and being very thin lies in folds like a bat's wing.

The figures are of the natural size, the white-breasted being the adult plumage and the other that of immaturity.