

STERNA GRACILIS, *Gould.*

Graceful Tern.

Sterna gracilis, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., November 1847.

THE graceful and elegant Tern here represented was killed by Mr. Gilbert on the Houtmann's Abrolhos, off the western coast of Australia, where he states it is very numerous, continually moving about from one part of those islands to another, and settling during the heat of the day on the coral ridges in large flocks. He was informed that it breeds there in great numbers during the month of November, but he was unfortunately too late to procure its eggs, which are said to be two in number, and to be deposited on the ground in a slight hollow among the loose coral ridges.

I regret to say that to this meagre account I have nothing to add, as I did not meet with the species myself, neither have I seen or received specimens from any other locality.

Crown of the head and back of the neck rich deep black; all the upper surface, wings and tail silvery grey; sides of the neck and all the under surface white, with a blush of rose-colour on the breast and centre of the abdomen; shafts of the primaries white, their outer webs slaty black, and a narrow stripe of dark slate-colour along the inner web close to the stem; irides brownish red; bill red; feet orange-red; nails black.

The Plate represents the bird of the natural size.