

STERNA MELANORHYNCHA, Gould.

Black-billed Tern.

Sterna velox, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part X. p. 139.

I KILLED several fine examples of this Tern off the coast of Van Diemen's Land and within a few miles of Maria Island; it is perhaps more nearly allied to the *Sterna Dougalli* than to any other species of the group; it differs, however, in its larger size and in the jet-black colouring of its bill: all the specimens I procured had the forehead white, a character of plumage which I consider to be indicative of the winter dress; in all probability this part will be black at the opposite season of the year. Its flight at sea is very powerful, and hence I gave it the name of *velox*, but as that specific term had been previously applied by Dr. Rüppell to a Tern from Africa, I have substituted that of *melanorhyncha*, which I think not inappropriate. I regret that I have no other information to communicate respecting it.

The sexes do not differ from each other in external appearance.

Forehead, lores, sides of the neck, and all the under surface white; space surrounding the eye, occiput, and back of the neck black; all the upper surface, wings and tail delicate grey; outer web of the external quill greyish black; shafts of all the primaries white; irides blackish brown; bill black.

The figures are of the natural size.