

PORZANA LEUCOPHRYS, *Gould.*

White-eyebrowed Water Crake.

Porzana leucophrys, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., March 23, 1847.

Al-man-dû-ar-ga, Aborigines of Port Essington.

THIS species is an inhabitant of the northern parts of Australia, where it frequents the thick clumps of mangrove roots bordering the lakes. It is a somewhat familiar bird, and is but little disturbed by the approach of an intruder; on the contrary, it will frequently run up a branch, turn round, gaze at him, and utter its very singular loud and chattering *cutche, cutche*, with but little apparent alarm. Occasionally several are heard in chorus, as if attempting to excel each other in noise. It is by no means difficult to obtain specimens, except when the water is too deep to admit of wading round the roots of the mangroves. As yet it has only been observed on one lake near Port Essington, but as the natives are perfectly acquainted with it, it is doubtless abundant on some other part of the Cobourg Peninsula.

The stomachs of those dissected were muscular, and contained the remains of insects of various kinds, and a large proportion of sand.

The young differ from the adult in having only an indication of the marks on the face, in having the crown of the head brown instead of brownish black, and the sides of the neck and flanks deep buff instead of dark grey.

From the base of the upper mandible to the posterior angle of the eye a streak of greyish white; from the eye to the gape a broad patch of deep black; crown of the head brownish black; back of the neck, upper surface and tail brownish black, each feather margined with pale reddish, the latter colour becoming very conspicuous on the wing-coverts and scapularies; wings pale brown; sides of the head, neck and breast grey; chin and centre of the abdomen white; flanks and under tail-coverts rufous; upper mandible reddish brown; tomia of both mandibles tile-red; legs and feet oil-green, blotched with light ash-colour.

The figures represent an adult and a young bird of the natural size.