

PORZANA FLUMINEA, *Gould.*

Spotted Water Crake.

Porzana fluminea, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part X. p. 139.

THIS species, like its representative in the British Islands (*Rallus porzana*, Linn.), inhabits morasses, reed-beds, and the neighbourhood of rivers clothed with dense herbage; hence it is seldom to be seen unless the greatest trouble and labour be taken to hunt it out from its hiding-place. The uniform grey tint of its breast and under surface, and its smaller size, are characters by which it may at once be distinguished from the European species.

The Spotted Water Crake is an inhabitant of Van Diemen's Land, South Australia and New South Wales, to which portions of Australia it would seem to be confined. My stay in Australia was too short to afford me opportunities of thoroughly investigating its habits, or of gaining any precise information respecting its nidification; but it is natural to suppose that in these respects it as closely assimilates to its European ally as it does in its structure and outward appearance.

The sexes present so little difference in colour, that they are only to be distinguished by dissection.

All the upper surface olive, with a broad stripe of blackish brown down the centre and two oval spots of white, bounded above and below with black on the margin of each web of every feather; primaries and secondaries brown; tail dark brown, margined with lighter brown and with an indication of white spots on the extreme edge; face, throat, chest and upper part of the abdomen dark slate-grey; lower part of the abdomen and flanks greyish black, crossed by narrow irregular bars of white; under tail-coverts white; bill orange-red at the base, and dark olive-green for the remainder of its length; feet dark olive-green.

The figures are of the natural size.