

PORPHYRIO BELLUS, *Gould.*

Azure-breasted Porphyrio.

Porphyrio bellus, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part VIII. p. 176.

Swamp-Hen, Colonists of Western Australia.

Gool-le-ma, Aborigines of the lowland districts of ditto.

THIS fine species of *Porphyrio* is a native of Western Australia, to which portion of the continent it would appear to be restricted; I did not observe it during my rambles in South Australia, nor has it yet been seen on the north coast. Of the two species found in Australia the present is by far the finest, exceeding the *Porphyrio melanotus* not only in size, but in the greater diversity and richness of its colouring, particularly in the azure-blue of the throat and chest, a character by which it is readily distinguished.

The Azure-breasted Porphyrio is abundant at Swan River, inhabiting the thick reed-beds and swampy districts of the lakes and rivers round Perth and Fremantle. Its habits and economy so nearly resemble those of the *Porphyrio*, so familiarly known in Van Diemen's Land and New South Wales, that a description of one equally applies to the other, and therefore need not be repeated here.

The only difference observable between the sexes is, that the male is rather brighter in colour and somewhat larger in size.

The gizzard is strong and muscular, and the food consists of vegetable substances, aquatic insects, and mollusca.

Occiput and crown of the head blackish brown, gradually passing into the light violet-purple which spreads over the nape, flanks and abdomen; throat, cheeks, fore-part of the neck and breast light azure-blue; all the upper surface from the nape downwards, including the tail, deep chocolate-brown; shoulders and spurious wing azure-blue; primaries blackish brown, their outer webs strongly tinged with green; irides bright red; bill red; knees, lower part of the tarsi, and inside of the feet dark greenish grey; remainder of the legs and feet grass-green.

The figure is of the natural size.