

HIATICULA MONACHA.

Hooded Dottrel.

Charadrius Monachus, Geoff. in Mus. Paris.—Wagl. Syst. Av., sp. 15.

———— *cucullatus*, Vieill., Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat., p. 136.

Ægialitis Monachus, Gould in Syn. Birds of Australia, Part II.

Hiaticula Monacha, List of Birds in Brit. Mus. Coll., part iii. p. 70.

THIS elegant species of Dottrel is universally dispersed over the sea-coasts of the southern parts of Australia, but is perhaps more abundant in Van Diemen's Land and the islands in Bass's Straits than elsewhere; I never observed it far inland, not even on the low saline marshy ground contiguous to the coast, in which respect it differs from the habits of the Common Dottrel of Europe, to which it is so nearly allied. I frequently found its two eggs on the shingly beach in a slight depression hollowed out by the bird for their reception just above high-water mark: these are so similar in appearance to the material upon which they are deposited that they would readily escape the attention of a casual observer; those I collected were of a pale stone-colour, sprinkled over with numerous small irregularly-shaped marks of brownish black, and are one inch and a half long by one inch and an eighth broad.

While tripping over the sandy beach, which it does with much elegance of movement, the black head of the male shows very conspicuously.

The male has the head, fore-part of the neck, and a band across the upper part of the back sooty black; back of the neck and all the under surface white; back, shoulders and tertials greyish brown; centre of the wing and the basal portion of the internal webs of the primaries and secondaries white, the rest black; two middle tail-feathers black; the three next on each side white at the base and tip and black in the centre, the remaining feathers wholly white; irides yellowish or orange-brown; eyelash rich reddish orange or scarlet; bill rich orange at the base, passing into yellow and black at the tip; legs flesh-colour.

The female differs from the male in having the crown mottled with black and white, the face and throat white, and in having only a narrow line of black at the base of the neck behind.

Youthful birds may be known by their resembling the female, but having the feathers of the back and upper surface narrowly fringed with brownish black.

The figures represent the two sexes of the natural size.