

locusts and grasshoppers form the principal part; a considerable quantity of sand is also found in the gizzard, which is very thick and muscular.

I frequently found the nest and eggs of this species while traversing the bush both in Van Diemen's Land and New South Wales, and the following are the notes made at the time, which are probably worth transcribing:—

“Van Diemen's Land, 28th of Dec. 1838. Found two bevys between Hobart Town and New Town; one clutch was much smaller than the other, being in fact only just hatched, while the others appeared to be two or three weeks old. The legs of the younger birds were dull flesh-yellow; their bills black at the tip and nearly white at the base; their eyes very dark brown: the legs of the older birds were orange, their bills still lighter at the base and their eyes grey.

“Yarrundi, New South Wales, Oct. 16, 1839. Found a nest and shot a female which was sitting on four eggs. While in the act of incubation the female appears to cover her eggs in a peculiar manner, placing two on each side of the breast where it is bare of feathers.”

The flight of the Varied Hemipode is heavy, tolerably rapid but of short duration, and it never flies higher than just above the scrub or grass.

The adults have the crown of the head, nape and forehead rich brown, spotted with white, and transversely rayed with large markings of brown; feathers of the cheeks and a stripe over each eye white, slightly fringed with black at their tips; throat greyish white; back and sides of the neck and mantle rich rufous brown; feathers of the back, rump and upper tail-coverts transversely rayed with chestnut-red and black, the former and the scapularies striped laterally with black and white; wings rufous, each feather spotted with white, which is bounded posteriorly with an irregular spot of black; primaries brown; chest and flanks olive, each feather having a triangular yellowish white spot at the tip; centre of the abdomen and under tail-coverts yellowish white; bill brown, with a bluish tinge; irides bright reddish orange; legs and feet orange; claws white.

The Plate represents a male and a female of the natural size.