

TRICHOGLOSSUS VERSICOLOR, *Vig.*

Varied Lorikeet.

Trichoglossus versicolor, Vig. in Lear's Ill. Psitt., pl. 36.—Selb. in Nat. Lib. Orn., vol. vi. Parrots, p. 157, pl. 21.
Wê-ro-ole, Aborigines of Port Essington.

THERE is no other species of the genus *Trichoglossus* yet discovered with which the present could be confounded; it is at once rendered conspicuously distinct from all its allies by the narrow stripe of yellow down the centre of the feathers of the upper and under surface; it will not therefore be necessary to enter into a minute description of its size and colour, particularly as the figures in the accompanying Plate are of the size of life, and as near the appearance of nature as it is possible to pourtray them.

The northern coast is the only part of Australia in which this elegant little Lorikeet has yet been discovered: it is particularly abundant at Port Essington, where its suctorial mode of feeding leads it, like the other members of the genus, to frequent the flowery *Eucalypti*. Mr. Gilbert says, "This bird congregates at times in immense flocks; when a flock is on the wing their movements are so regular and simultaneous that they might easily be mistaken for a cloud passing rapidly along, were it not for the utterance of their usual piercing scream, which is frequently so loud as to be almost deafening. They feed on the topmost branches of the *Eucalypti* and *Melaleuca*. I observed them to be extremely abundant during the month of August on all the small islands in Van Diemen's Gulf.

"The stomach is membranous and extremely diminutive in size. The food consists of honey and minute portions of the blossoms of their favourite trees."

Could this species be transmitted to Europe, and a kind of food suitable to it be discovered, it would form one of the most delightful cage-pets that has ever been introduced.

The male has the lores and crown of the head rich deep red; round the neck a collar of deep carulean blue; back brownish green; wings green; rump and upper tail-coverts light yellowish green; across the chest a broad band of purplish red; under surface of the shoulder, abdomen, flanks and under tail-coverts light yellowish green; all the feathers of the upper surface with a narrow stripe of yellowish green; the stripes being more yellow at the occiput, almost form a band; ear-coverts yellow; all the feathers of the under surface with a narrow line of bright yellow down the centre; on each side of the abdomen and down the inside of the thighs stained with patches of purplish red; primaries black, margined externally with deep green, with a fine line of yellowish green on the extreme edge of the feathers; tail deep green, all but the two middle feathers greenish yellow on their internal webs; irides bright reddish yellow, with a very narrow ring of dark red next the pupil; bill scarlet; cere and naked space round the eyes greenish white; tarsi and feet light ash-grey.

The female resembles her mate, but is much less brilliant in all her markings.

The figures are those of a male and a female of the natural size.