

PSEPHOTUS HÆMATOGASTER, *Gould.*

Crimson-bellied Parrakeet.

Platycercus hæmatogaster, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part V. p. 89.

THIS species of Parrakeet is an inhabitant of the interior of New South Wales, where it frequents the borders of the rivers Namoi and Darling; in all probability its range extends far to the northward; but, so far as is yet known, it has never been found in Southern or Western Australia; I met with it in tolerable abundance in the neighbourhood of the Lower Namoi, where it appeared to give a decided preference to those parts of the plains which were of a loose mouldy character, and with which the colour of its back so closely assimilates as to be scarcely distinguished from it. Like the other members of the family, it is mostly observed in small flocks, and occasionally in pairs, feeding upon the seeds of the various grasses abounding on the plains. It is only when the bird after a short flight alights on the branches, that the splendid scarlet of the belly, relieved by the yellow of the sides, is seen to advantage; when thus seen, however, it is a truly beautiful object, and is scarcely excelled by any other species of the group.

I did not ascertain any particulars respecting its nidification, but we may easily suppose that it breeds in the districts above mentioned, as I met with it there in the height of the summer.

The male has the forehead and face ultramarine blue; crown of the head, upper surface, sides of the neck and the chest greyish olive-brown, washed with yellow on the rump and upper tail-coverts; lesser wing-coverts mingled verditer-green and blue; greater coverts rich reddish chestnut; basal half of the external webs of the primaries and secondaries, and edge of the wing rich indigo-blue; under surface of the shoulder light indigo-blue; inner webs and tips of the primaries dark brown; apical half of the external web of the primaries fringed with grey; two centre tail-feathers light olive-green, passing into deep blue at the tip; the remainder deep blue at the base, largely tipped with white, the blue gradually blending with the white on the external web; upper part of the abdomen and flanks primrose-yellow; centre of the abdomen and under tail-coverts crimson-red; irides dark brown; nostrils and feet mealy brown; bill horn-colour.

The female differs in being smaller, and in being much less brilliant in all her markings.

The figures represent the two sexes the size of life.