

## PLATYCERCUS EXIMIUS, *Vig. and Horsf.*

### Rose-hill Parrakeet.

*Psittacus eximius*, Shaw, Nat. Misc., pl. 96.—Ib. Zool. of New Holl., t. 1.—Kuhl, Consp. Psitt. in Nov. Act. &c., vol. x. p. 54. No. 87.—Lath. Ind. Orn. Suppl., p. xxi.

*Perruche omnicolore*, Le Vaill., Hist. Nat. des Perr., p. 29. pl. 28.

*Nonpareil Parrot*, Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. ii. p. 138. No. 41.—Id. Gen. Syn. Suppl., p. 85.—Shaw, Zool., vol. viii. p. 411. pls. 57, 58.

*Platycercus eximius*, Vig. and Horsf. in Linn. Trans., vol. xv. p. 281.—Wagl. Mon. Psitt. in Abhand. &c., p. 530.

*Lori-Perruche de la Mer du Sud*, Sonn. Edit. de Buff.

*Psittacus capitatus*, Shaw, Zool., vol. viii. p. 466.

*Rose-hill Parrakeet*, Colonists of New South Wales.

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THE present beautiful bird ranks among the earliest of the natural productions of Australia that were sent to Europe, but no information having hitherto been published respecting its habits and economy, few persons are aware that it is exclusively confined to New South Wales and Tasmania, its occurrence even in South Australia being utterly unknown: in the more distant colonies of Swan River and Port Essington it certainly does not occur; but in each of those colonies it is represented by a nearly allied species, whose habits and general economy are as similar as possible. Although one of the commonest birds of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, it is very local, a river frequently constituting the boundary of its habitat, over which it so rarely passes, that I never, during my stay in the country, saw the bird on the south side of the Derwent; while in the forests on the opposite shore, not more than a quarter or half a mile distant, it was very numerous. I believe it is never seen in the forests clothing the borders of D'Entrecasteaux' Channel on the south, or of the River Tamar on the north of the island, those districts being inhabited by the *Platycercus flaviventris*, whose greater size and olive-green plumage are in beautiful accordance with those vast, and as yet unexplored forests of evergreen *Eucalypti*. More delicate in its structure, and far more brilliant in its plumage, the *Platycercus eximius* resorts to the open parts of the country, such as undulating grassy hills and plains bordered and studded here and there with large trees or belts of low acacias or banksias, among the branches of which, particularly those of the acacias, this beautiful bird may be seen in small companies, the rich scarlet and yellow of their breasts vieing with the lovely blossoms of the trees; in a word, districts of a sandy nature, small plains, open spots among the hills, and thinly timbered country where grass abounds, constitute the peculiar and natural habitat of this bird: hence it is not found to the north of the Derwent, where the country is of a different character; but it is numerous throughout the centre of the island between Hobart Town and Launceston, where small companies may constantly be seen resorting to the public roads, like the Sparrow in England, and upon being disturbed by the passer-by they merely fly off to the nearest tree, or to the rails of the wayside fences. Scenes like these fill the mind with sensations of no ordinary description, and excite the greatest astonishment in those who have recently arrived in the country; the novelty, however, as I have observed in numerous instances, soon wears away, and a caged lark, linnet or blackbird from the land of their birth would be highly cherished and valued, while the beautiful productions of the island would be passed by unheeded, except to deal out destruction among them, with no sparing hand, for some slight injury they may have inflicted upon the rising corn. The above remarks refer more particularly to Van Diemen's Land, but apply with equal force to New South Wales, where the bird inhabits all situations similar in character to those above referred to. It breeds in great abundance in Van Diemen's Land and New South Wales; it is found in great numbers in the district of the Upper Hunter, and was formerly very numerous at Paramatta, particularly in the neighbourhood of Rose Hill, whence its name. It lays from seven to ten beautiful white eggs in