

APROSMICTUS ERYTHROPTERUS.

Red-winged Lory.

Psittacus erythropterus, Gmel. Syst., vol. i. p. 343.—Kuhl, Nova Acta, vol. x. p. 53.—Quoy et Gaim. Zool. de la Voy. autour du Monde, pl. 27.—Lath. Ind. Orn., vol. i. p. 126.

Psittacus melanotus, Shaw, Nat. Misc., pl. 653.—Ib. Gen. Zool., vol. viii. p. 467.

Crimson-winged Parrot, Lath. Gen. Syn., vol. i. p. 299; and Supp. p. 60.—Ib. Gen. Hist., vol. ii. p. 253.

Platycercus erythropterus, Vig. and Horsf. in Linn. Trans., vol. xv. p. 284.—Less. Traité d'Orn., p. 208.—Wagl. Mon. Psitt. in Abhand., tom. i. pp. 492 and 536.—Steph. Cont. of Shaw's Gen. Zool., vol. xiv. p. 123.

Aprosmictus erythropterus, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., August 9, 1842.

THIS beautiful Lory is very widely distributed over the greater portion of the continent of Australia, and its range also extends to New Guinea and Timor; I must not, however, fail to remark, that specimens from the latter countries, as well as those from Port Essington, are smaller in all their admeasurements than those from the southern and eastern portions of Australia; no difference whatever exists in the markings or colouring of the individuals from all these various localities, I am therefore induced to consider them as so many races of the same bird, rather than as distinct species.

In Australia, the Red-winged Lory, so far as my observation has enabled me to judge, is as exclusively an inhabitant of the interior of the country as its near ally the King Lory is a denizen of the thick brushes which extend along the coast, both, as is always the case, being beautifully adapted to the character of country they are respectively destined to inhabit. The extensive belts of *Acacia pendula* which stretch over and diversify the arid plains of the great Australian basin, are tenanted with thousands of this bird, besides numerous other species, roaming about either in small companies of six or eight, or in flocks of a much greater number. It is beyond the power of my pen to describe or give a just idea of the extreme beauty of the appearance of the Red-winged Lory when seen among the silvery branches of the Acacia, particularly when the flocks comprise a large number of adult males, the gorgeous scarlet of whose shoulders offers so striking a contrast to the surrounding objects. It is rather thinly dispersed among the trees skirting the rivers which intersect the Liverpool Plains, but from thence towards the interior it increases in number, and probably extends over the whole of the interior, for it is as abundant at Port Essington on the north coast as it is on the southern: I have also received it from South Australia and the north-west coast, but not as yet from Swan River. In its actions and disposition it has much of the character of the King Lory, being morose and indocile: as it is naturally shy and wary, it is much more difficult of approach than the generality of the Parrots; and although the contrary is sometimes the case, it seldom becomes tame or familiar in captivity.

Its powers of flight are fully adequate and in every way adapted to the extensive plains it is destined to inhabit, enabling it readily to pass, frequently at a great height in the air, from one part of the plain to another. Its flight is, however, performed with a motion of the wings totally different from that of any other member of the great family of *Psittacidae* I have seen, and has frequently reminded me of the heavy flapping manner of the Pewit, except that the flapping motion was even slower and more laboured, like that of the Terns. It has a loud screeching piercing cry, which it frequently utters during flight.

Its food consists of berries, the fruits of a species of *Loranthus*, and the pollen of flowers, to which is added a species of scaly bug-like insect, which infests the branches of its favourite trees; in all probability small caterpillars also form a part, as I have found them in the crops of several of the *Platycerci*.

It breeds in the holes of the large Eucalypti growing on the banks of rivers; the eggs, which are white, being four or five in number, about an inch and an eighth long by seven-eighths broad.

The sexes, as will be seen in the accompanying Plate, differ very considerably in the colouring of their plumage; the young males during the first two years cannot be distinguished from the female, except by dissection.

The male has the head and back of the neck verditer green; throat, all the under surface, edge of the shoulder and upper tail-coverts bright yellowish green; back black; rump lazuline blue; wing-coverts deep rich crimson-red; scapularies dark green, tipped with black; primaries black at the base, with the external webs and the apical portion of the inner webs deep green; secondaries black, edged with deep green, and one or two with a tinge of red at the tip; tail green above, passing into yellow at the tip, the extreme end fringed with pink; under surface of the tail black, tipped with yellow and pink as above; irides reddish orange in some, scarlet in others; bill rich orange-scarlet; feet olive-brown.

The female has the head and upper surface dull green; under surface dull yellowish green; a few of the wing-coverts crimson-red, forming a stripe down the wing; rump pale verditer blue; tail-feathers more largely tipped with pink than in the male; irides olive-brown; bill light horn-colour.

The Plate represents the two sexes of the natural size.