

PTEROPODOCYS PHASIANELLA.

Ground Graucalus.

Graucalus Phasianellus, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part VIII. p. 142.

Ceblepyris maxima, Rupp. Mon. in Mus. Senckenbergianum, 1839, p. 28. taf. iii.

Goo-râ-ling, Aborigines of York, Western Australia.

THE rarity of this species in our collections is sufficient evidence that it is a bird inhabiting the interior of the country, and that its native localities have been seldom visited by the explorer ; hence it was a source of no ordinary gratification to me when I first encountered it on the plains bordering the River Namoi in New South Wales, and perceived that no very lengthened study of its habits and mode of life was requisite to ascertain that its structure is as beautifully adapted for terrestrial progression and for a residence on the ground, as the structure of the other *Graucali* fits them to inhabit the branches of the trees ; more beautiful modifications of form in fact can scarcely be seen than occur among the members of this group, which now comprehends a considerable number of species ; the present bird, however, is the only terrestrial one that has yet come under my notice, either from Australia or the great nursery of these birds—India and the Indian islands. The lengthened form of the tarsi and tail and the narrow form of the bill are the most striking of the structural differences between *Pteropodocys* and *Graucalus*, and are so apparent that they must be perceptible at a single glance to all who will examine them. Plains and open glades skirted by belts of high trees are the localities in which I generally met with this bird either in pairs or small parties of four or five ; in the latter case they were probably the brood of the year, as they usually consisted of both immature and adult birds.

Its powers of progression on the ground are considerable, and are only equalled by those of flight ; when disturbed it flies across the plain to the belts of lofty trees, among the branches of which it appears to be quite as much at ease as upon the ground. During flight the white mark on the rump is very conspicuous, and may be seen at a considerable distance.

The food consists of insects and seeds of various kinds.

That its range extends over the whole of the interior of Australia is more than probable, as I have lately received a specimen from Swan River, in which part of the country it doubtless inhabits localities similar to those it frequents on the east coast.

Of its nidification I regret to say nothing is at present known.

The sexes, which exhibit no external differences, may be thus described :—

Head, neck, chest and back delicate grey, becoming darker on the ear-coverts ; rump and abdomen white, crossed by narrow irregular bars of black ; under tail-coverts white ; wings and tail black, the latter having the tips of the outer and the basal portion of all the feathers white ; bill and feet black, tinged with olive ; irides buffy white.

The figures are of the natural size.