

## ATTICORA LEUCOSTERNON, *Gould.*

### White-breasted Swallow.

*Hirundo leucosternus*, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part VIII. p. 172.

Boo-de-boo-de of the Aborigines of the mountain districts of Western Australia.

Black and White Swallow of the Colonists.

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For the present I have placed this new and elegant Swallow with the members of the genus *Atticora*; the type of which is the *Hirundo fasciata* of authors, a bird inhabiting South America, from which country I have seen two species, while South Africa presents us with a third; the present, therefore, may be considered as the representative of the genus in Australia, thus further evidencing that beautiful law of representation alluded to in the page on *Cypselus Australis* respecting the Swift, Swallow and Martin.

I have never myself seen this bird; the specimen from which my original description was taken was presented to me in 1839 by Mr. Charles Coxen, who had killed it some years before, and who informed me that it was one of a pair that he observed flying over a small lake in the neighbourhood of the Lower Namoi; its companion was not procured.

The second example was killed at Swan River, where Mr. Gilbert in his notes from Western Australia says, "I only observed this bird in the interior, and as far as I can learn, it has not been seen to the westward of York: I am told it is merely a summer visitor. It is a very wandering species, never very numerous, and is generally seen in small flocks of from ten to twenty in number, flying about, sometimes in company with the other Swallows, for about ten minutes, and then flying right away; I noticed this singular habit every time I had an opportunity of observing the species. It usually flies very high, a circumstance which renders it difficult to procure specimens.

"Its flight more nearly resembles that of the Swift than that of the Swallow; its cry also, at times, very much resembles that of the former.

"Its food principally consists of minute black flies.

"This bird chooses for its nest the deserted hole of either the Dalgyte (*Perameles lagotis*) or the Boodee (a species of *Bettongia*), in the side of which it burrows for about seven or nine inches in a horizontal direction, making no nest, but merely laying its eggs on the bare sand."

Crown of the head light brown, surrounded by a ring of white; lores black; a broad band commencing at the eye, and passing round the back of the neck, brown; centre of the back, throat, chest and under surface of the shoulder white; wings and tail brownish black; rump, upper tail-coverts, abdomen and under tail-coverts black; irides dark reddish brown; bill blackish brown; legs and feet greenish grey.

The figures are of the natural size.