

## ELANUS SCRIPTUS, *Gould.*

### Letter-winged Kite.

*Elanus scriptus*, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., June 28, 1842.

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I HAVE nothing more to communicate respecting this new species of *Elanus*, than that I found a single specimen of it among a collection of skins that had been sent from South Australia. In size it considerably exceeds the Black-shouldered Kite, from which it also differs in the colouring of the upper surface, which is much darker and washed with reddish brown, the same part in the other species being delicate grey; the principal character, however, by which it may be distinguished, not only from its Australian relative, but from every other member of the genus yet discovered, is the great extent of the black mark on the under surface of the wing, which following the line of the bones from the body to the pinion, assumes when the wing is spread the form of the letter V, or if both wings are seen at the same time that of a W, divided in the centre by the body; which circumstance has suggested the specific name I have applied to it.

It will be admitted by every one that this new species is an interesting addition to the Australian *Falconidae*, a group, of which the Fauna of that country is more meagre in species than any similar extent of country known.

Forehead and line over the eye white; head and all the upper surface dark grey, washed with reddish brown; wing-coverts deep glossy black; primaries greyish brown, becoming nearly white on their webs, all but the first two or three margined with white at the tip; secondaries brownish grey on the outer web, white on the inner and at the extremity; tertiaries brownish grey; two centre tail-feathers grey; the remaining tail-feathers pale brown on their outer webs, and white on the inner; lores black; all the under surface and edge of the shoulder white; on the under surface of the wing, following the line of the bones, a broad mark of black, assuming the form of the letter V; bill black; cere and legs yellow; claws black; irides orange.

The figure is of the natural size.