

INTRODUCTION.

Subfamily STERNINÆ, *Bonap.*

The members of this family inhabiting Australia and Europe are nearly equal in number, and in each country examples of the same forms are found to exist; the Australian fauna has also a *Gygis* and an *Onychoprion*, neither of which inhabit the European seas, and four species of *Anoüs*, of which only one frequents the northern hemisphere.

Genus SYLOCHELIDON, *Brehm.*

560. *Sylochelidon strenuus* Vol. VII. Pl. 22.

A representative of the *S. Caspius* of Europe.

Genus THALASSEUS, *Boie.*

The members of this genus, the type of which is the *T. Cantiacus* of the British Islands, are widely dispersed over most parts of the Old World, and three distinct species inhabit Australia.

561. *Thalasseus Pelecanoïdes* Vol. VII. Pl. 23.
 562. *Thalasseus poliocercus*, *Gould* Vol. VII. Pl. 24.
 563. *Thalasseus Torresii*, *Gould* Vol. VII. Pl. 25.

Since my account of this species was printed I have seen adult specimens from Southern India, which country is in all probability its true habitat.

Genus STERNA, *Linn.*

The members of this genus, as now restricted, enjoy so wide a range over the globe, that they may be said to be universally dispersed: three species are found in Australia.

564. *Sterna melanorhyncha*, *Gould* Vol. VII. Pl. 26.
 565. *Sterna gracilis*, *Gould* Vol. VII. Pl. 27.
 566. *Sterna melanauchen*, *Temm.* Vol. VII. Pl. 28.

“This beautiful bird,” says Mr. M’Gillivray, “is very local in its breeding-places, the only one known to me being one of the ‘three sand-banks’ near Sir Charles Hardy’s Islands. The eggs are two in number, deposited in a slight hollow in the sand. I have seen this bird on another neighbouring sand-bank, also on Solitary Island, near Cape York, and in Endeavour Straits, but was unable to procure a specimen from any of the three last-mentioned localities, on account of its excessive shyness. It is one of the most noisy of the Terns, and I generally saw it in small parties of half-a-dozen, or thereabouts. The fully-fledged young of the year differs from the adult in having the black on the head dark brown mottled with white, and the whole of the upper surface and wings variegated with dark brownish grey.”

Genus STERNULA, *Boie.*

Europe and Australia are both tenanted by little Terns, the specific distinctness of which cannot be questioned, however much that of the large Terns (genus *Sylochelidon*) may be: ought we not then to infer that some peculiar law prevails, and that if one be distinct the other is also? However that may be, it is certain that birds regarded as identically the same, because no external difference is perceptible, breed at opposite seasons in the two hemispheres, and that if the birds of one hemisphere be brought and retained in the other, they continue to moult their feathers and to breed at the same period that they would have done had they remained in their native country.

567. *Sternula Nereis*, *Gould* Vol. VII. Pl. 29.