

BETTONGIA RUFESCENS, Gray.

Rufous Jerboa Kangaroo.

Bettongia rufescens, Gray, Mag. Nat. Hist. 1837, vol. i. p. 584.—Gould, Mon. of Macropodidæ, pl. .—Gray, List of Mamm. in Coll. Brit. Mus., p. 94.

Hypsiprymnus rufescens, Waterh. in Jard. Nat. Lib. Mamm., vol. xi. (Marsupialia) p. 188.—Ib. Nat. Hist. of Mamm., vol. i. p. 196.

———— *melanotis*, Ogilby in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part vi. p. 62.

THERE will be but little difficulty in distinguishing this species from every other member of the genus *Bettongia* yet discovered. It is the largest and most powerful of its tribe, and this remark applies particularly to its strong hind feet and legs: the hair with which it is clothed is also more harsh and bristly than that of its allies; again, the back part of the ears is nearly black, and the back and upper surface generally are strongly suffused with chestnut-brown, with which the stiff silvery-white interspersed hairs present a strong contrast. The south-eastern portion of the continent is its true habitat; and it is almost universally dispersed over New South Wales, both on the sea and interior side of the mountain ranges. I found it very abundant on the stony sterile ridges bordering the grassy flats of the Upper Hunter, and in all similar situations. It constructs a warm nest in which it lies coiled up during the day, the nests being placed under the shelter of a fallen tree or some scrubby bush: it sometimes sits in a form like the Hare Kangaroo, but never sits out on the open plains like that species: on being startled, it runs for a short distance with remarkable rapidity; but, from its invariably seeking shelter in the hollow logs, easily falls a prey to the natives, who hunt it for food. In size it fully equals that of a full-grown rabbit: its food consists of roots and grasses. There is no material difference in the colouring of the sexes; but in size the female is somewhat smaller than the male.

Fur harsh and wiry; general colour grizzled-grey and rufous, the latter hue predominating on the back; ears black externally and buffy-white internally; under surface greyish-white, slightly tinged with buff; tail strongly prehensile, covered with short wiry grizzled-grey hairs, becoming whiter towards the tip, where they are much lengthened; under side of the tail, throughout its whole length, dirty-white; hands grey; nails white; tarsi and feet greyish.

The figures are about the size of life.