

LAGORCHESTES HIRSUTUS, Gould.

Rufous Hare Kangaroo.

Lagorchestes hirsutus, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc. 1844, p. 32.

Macropus (Lagorchestes) hirsutus, Waterh. Nat. Hist. of Mamm., vol. i. p. 92.

ALL the examples I have seen of this species, some of which are at the British Museum, and the remainder in my own collection, have been procured in Western Australia, whence they were sent to this country by Mr. Gilbert; judging from the size of *Lagorchestes fasciatus*, I should suppose that the present animal would weigh about four or six pounds, the weight of a moderate-sized hare. The lengthened shaggy reddish hairs, which are abundantly distributed over the lower part of the back, and particularly near the base of the tail, at once distinguish it from all the other members of the genus. The only note transmitted by Mr. Gilbert, respecting the habits of the species, is as follows:—

“It has a hairy muzzle: in its habits it assimilates in an equal degree to those of the *Bettongia* and the *Lagorchesti*. It constructs a burrow, open at both ends, with a seat at the side of the entrance, from which it plunges into the burrow the instant it is alarmed. It feeds on the open country adjacent to the thickets, where there is a low thick scrub about two feet high: when running, and particularly when hunted, it utters a singular note, resembling the syllable *ting* rather quickly repeated. Some slight difference is found to exist in specimens from various localities, which I presume must be regarded as due to the difference of situation, and nothing more.” He adds, that it is called *Woo-rup* by the Aborigines of the interior of Western Australia, who appear to give the name of *Mör-da* to the animal during the period of immaturity; at all events, the young example sent by him with that name attached to it, is undoubtedly the young of the present species. Both the adult and the young were procured in the Walyemara district.

Mr. Waterhouse having given a very accurate description of this animal from the specimens in the British Museum, I take the liberty of transcribing it:—

“The fur is long and moderately soft; the upper parts of the body grey, much tinted with rufous brown and freely pencilled with white; the sides of the body, rump, hind- and fore-legs are of a bright rust-red, deepest on the hinder and palest on the fore-legs; the throat, chest and mesial line of the belly rusty white; crown of the head grey; a broad space around the eye is of a bright, but palish rust-red, which tint extends on to the muzzle; a whitish line on the upper lip runs back past the angle of the mouth; ear clothed internally with somewhat lengthened white hairs, externally they are pencilled with rusty yellow and dusky, the former being, however, the prevailing tint; the hinder half is almost entirely clothed with small white hairs; the fore-feet are clothed with glistening yellowish white hairs; the tarsus is almost entirely of a pale rusty red, but is of a rusty white towards the hinder part, and the toes are obscurely suffused with brownish rust-red; the tail is clothed throughout with short, stiff, adpressed hairs, scarcely hiding the scaly skin; they are finely pencilled with black and rust-red at the base of the tail, but on the upper surface they assume an uniform brownish black tint, which is continued to the point; on the under surface they are of a dirty pale rust-red, and towards the apex is a naked scaly space of about an inch in length; the fur of the back is nearly black next the skin, but a considerable portion of each hair is of a brownish rust-red; near the point the hairs are broadly annulated with white, and at the point they are dusky or black; on the belly the fur is ashy grey next the skin.”

The figure is rather less than the natural size.