

LAGORCHESTES LEPOROIDES, Gould.

Hare Kangaroo.

Macropus Leporides, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part viii. p. 93.—Waterh. in Jard. Nat. Lib. *Marsupialia*, p. 204.
Lagorchestes Leporoides, Gould, Mon. of Macropodidæ, pl. —Gray, List of Spec. of Mamm. in Coll. Brit. Mus., p. 95.
Macropus (Lagorchestes) Leporoides, Waterh. Nat. Hist. of Mamm., vol. i. p. 82.

THE name of Hare Kangaroo has been given to this species, as much from the similarity of its size and the colour and texture of its fur, as from its habits assimilating in many particulars to those of that animal. I usually found it solitary, and sitting close in a well-formed seat under the shelter of a tuft of grass on the open plains. For a short distance its fleetness is beyond that of all others of its group that I have had an opportunity of coursing; its powers of leaping are also equally extraordinary, in proof of which I may mention an incident connected with the chase of the animal which occurred to myself. While out on the plains in South Australia I started a Hare Kangaroo before two fleet dogs; after running to the distance of a quarter of a mile, it suddenly doubled and came back upon me, the dogs following close at its heels; I stood perfectly still until the animal had arrived within twenty feet before it observed me, when to my astonishment, instead of branching off to the right or to the left, it bounded clear over my head, and on descending to the ground I was enabled to make a successful shot, by which it was procured.

Considerable diversity of colour is observable in different specimens, some being much redder than others; but the sexes are scarcely distinguishable in size.

I have but little doubt that this animal enjoys a wide range over the interior of New South Wales; it certainly inhabits the Liverpool Plains as well as those in the neighbourhood of the Namoi and the Gwydyr, from all of which localities I have received numerous examples; it is equally certain that it is found on the grassy plains of South Australia, for I not only found it there myself, but specimens have since been sent to me from thence by the late Mr. Strange. Now as the character of all these districts is very similar, it is probable that the Hare Kangaroo is equally abundant in the intermediate countries as it is in those above mentioned; as yet, I have never seen specimens in collections from the Northern or Western portions of Australia.

The following is Mr. Waterhouse's description of the character of the fur and the colouring of this animal, which being taken from my own specimen, and more minute than that given by myself in the "Proceedings of the Zoological Society," is here transcribed.

"Fur long and soft; on the upper parts of the body variegated with black, rust-colour and rusty white, the white most conspicuous and the rust-colour but little seen; the back of the neck and shoulders, and a considerable space round each eye tinted with palish rust-colour, sometimes inclining to buffy yellow; sides of the body and haunches suffused with rust-colour; under parts greyish white tinted with rust-colour, but nearly pure white between the hind legs; fore legs with a more or less strongly marked black patch, at the base externally (or behind the elbow), but the hairs on this part are pencilled with white; fore arm and hand with short brown hairs, pencilled with very pale brown; on the middle of the tibia is a dusky patch; tarsi impure palish rust-colour finely freckled with brown; toes brownish; tail clothed throughout with small adpressed hairs, which are partly black and partly white; beneath brownish white;" nails of the hind feet very long, pointed, and jet-black.

The figure is about the natural size; if at all different, it is a trifle less.