BELIDEUS ARIEL, *Gould.*

Ariel Belideus.

Belidea Ariel, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part X. p. 11.
Petaurus (Belideus) Ariel, Waterh. Nat. Hist. of Mamm., p. 336.
Petaurus Ariel, Gray, List of Mamm. in Brit. Mus., p. 84.
Wor-gi, Aborigines of Port Essington.

This is the smallest and undoubtedly one of the most elegant species of the genus yet discovered: it is as much smaller in all its proportions than *B. breviceps* as that species is smaller than *B. sciureus*; the tail is also much more cylindrical, less clothed with fur, and equally or more attenuated than that of *B. breviceps*; the fur of the upper surface is also lighter and of a more delicate buffy grey, and the under surface either pale yellow or rich yellowish buff, as represented in the accompanying figure. The native country of this little animal is the northern portion of Australia; all the specimens I have seen have been sent from Port Essington, where Mr. Gilbert states that, previous to the hurricane which visited that colony in 1839, it was exceedingly abundant, there being scarcely a hollow tree, shed, or hut, uninhabited by one or more pairs, but since that occurrence it had become exceedingly rare. Commander Ince, R.N., succeeded in bringing living examples from Port Essington to this country, and it is by his kindness in favouring me with the loan of his animals that I have been enabled to make the accompanying drawing from life.

In habits, economy and mode of life it assimilates so closely to the species inhabiting the south coast, that a separate description of them is unnecessary.

General colour of the upper surface pale ashy grey, faintly suffused with yellow; a narrow black mark commences between the eyes, runs along the back, and extends nearly to the root of the tail; eyes narrowly encircled with black, and a black ring surrounds the ear at the base, but is interrupted at the posterior angle where the hairs are pale yellow; upper surface of the flank membrane blackish, especially near the margin, which is pale yellow; anterior part of the arm, the wrist, and the posterior part of the hind-leg dusky; under surface pale yellow.

The figures are of the natural size.