

PHALANGISTA LANIGINOSA, Gould.

Woolly Phalanger.

At the period of my visit to Australia, this species was abundant on most of the *Angophora* or "Apple-tree" flats of the Upper Hunter, particularly those of the Dartbrook district, and it is doubtless to be found there still, and in all probability will be for ages to come. I mention this locality especially because there are two nearly allied *Phalangistæ* in New South Wales, which, when brought to this country and exposed in our museums, undergo so great a change in the colouring of their fur as to render it exceedingly difficult to distinguish them. These two nearly allied species are the *Phalangista Cooki* and the *P. laniginosa* figured on the accompanying Plate. I am the more certain of the specific distinctness of these two animals as those keen observers, the natives, particularly impressed upon my attention that the animal from the flats was different from the one frequenting the brushes which clothe the "corries" of the great Liverpool Chain. While in the country I had no difficulty in distinguishing them, and never had a doubt of their being distinct; but what was plain to me in Australia, I am unable to render so clear to the Mammalogists of Europe; I have no doubt, however, that when the great country of Australia has sons of her own interested in the subject, my views will be borne out and strictly verified, and it is for this reason that I have given so particularly the precise locality in which my specimens were obtained; doubtless all similar districts in Eastern Australia will also be favoured with the presence of this animal. I may remark that there is a greater difference between the *P. laniginosa* and *P. Cooki* than there is between *P. Cooki* and *P. fuliginosa*, which, indeed, may possibly be mere varieties of each other, although I have treated them as distinct.

My figure of *P. laniginosa* is taken from a fully adult male now before me. This animal is clothed in a thick, short, woolly kind of fur, of a greyish hue, with a wash of rufous on the outer side of the limbs; has the throat and all the under surface white, and the tail not so extensively tipped with white as in its near allies; it is also of smaller size.

The following is a more minute description of the animal:—Fur soft and yielding to the touch; general colour of the upper surface brownish grey, interspersed on the back with numerous greyish-white hairs; head and neck suffused with rufous, particularly round the eyes and on the outer surface of the ears; lower edge of the ear buff; whiskers black; outer side of the limbs rusty red; throat, under surface of the body and inner side of the limbs greyish white; basal fourth of the tail brownish grey, suffused with rufous; apical fourth white, the middle portion blackish brown.

The figures are fully the size of life.