LAGORCHESTES LEPOROÏDES, *Gould.*

Hare Kangaroo.

Spec. Char.—*Lag. pro magnitudine et velleris colore nec non texturâ,* Lepori timido *assimilis; capite breviusculo; antibrachiis pedibusque parvulis; caudâ breviusculâ et gracili; corpore supernè nigro, fusco et flavido variegato; apud latera, et circum oculos colore pallidè fulvo prævalente; abdomine e cinereo albo; artubus anticis ad basin nigris.*

Descr.—In size and in the colouring and character of the fur remarkably like a hare: top of the head grizzled black and white; upper surface variegated with black and cream-white (in some specimens with black and pale rusty buff); sides of the body, throat and chest buffy white; chin white; abdomen greyish white; arms blackish at the base; hands buffy white; legs tinged with rusty red; feet brownish white; broad space round the eye buff; ears white inside, greyish outside; tail pale brownish grey.

	feet.	inches.
Length from the nose to the extremity of the tail	2	$6\frac{1}{2}$
,, of tail		11
,, ,, tarsus and toes, including the nail		$5\frac{1}{2}$
,, ,, arm and hand, including the nails		$2\frac{1}{2}$
,, ,, face from the tip of the nose to the base of the ear . . .		$3\frac{1}{4}$
,, ,, ear		$2\frac{1}{4}$

Macropus Leporides, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part VIII. p. 93.

This singular little Kangaroo, which I have made the type of a new genus, ranges widely over the interior; it is tolerably abundant in all the plains of South Australia, particularly those situated between the Belts of the Murray and the mountain ranges; I also hunted it successfully on the Lower Namoi; and skins were presented to me by the Messrs. Coxen, who, I believe, had obtained them on the Liverpool Plains. Judging from what information I could gather respecting it, I believe it to be peculiar to the interior, and never to frequent that portion of New South Wales which lies between the ranges and the coast.

Although belonging to that division of the family which includes the Rat and Jerboa Kangaroos, it differs from them in inhabiting a different character of country, in having a hairy muzzle, and in the hands and nails being smaller, more slender and more delicately formed than any other known species, points indicating that it is not a burrowing animal; and it is apparent from the sharpness and spiny form of the fore-nails, that they are never used for the purpose of obtaining roots, as is decidedly the case with the Rat and Jerboa Kangaroos. That the baldness or hairiness of the muzzle indicates a great difference in the habits, not only of this, but of every other group of animals, is sufficiently evident, although to what extent, is not yet perhaps perfectly understood. Mr. Ogilby has most happily seized upon this character for some of his divisions among the Antelopes. Mr. Ogilby states that the lips of those animals having hairy muzzles are strongly prehensile, and that they procure their food by browsing, while those having the muzzle bald are strictly grazers, and are perhaps less choice in the selection of their food; and from what I have observed in the Kangaroos in Australia, I am inclined to concur in the opinion of the scientific Secretary of the Zoological Society.

The name of Hare Kangaroo has been given to this species, as much from the similarity of its form, 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: 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 by size.