MACROPUS MAJOR, *Shaw.*

Great Grey Kangaroo.

Spec. Char.—*Macropus vellere corporis, supernè, e cinereo fusco, apud antibrachios et abdomen canescenti-cinereo, antipedibus, pedibus posticis, caudæque apice nigris; lineâ albescente suprà labium per genas excurrente.*

Descr.—All the fur on the upper surface uniform greyish brown above, passing into grisly grey on the arm and under surface; a faint line of greyish white above the upper lip and along the sides of the face; hands, feet, and tip of the tail black.

	Male.		Female.	
	feet.	inches.	feet.	inches.
Length from the nose to the extremity of the tail	7	10	5	11½
„ of tail	3	2	2	4½
„ „ tarsus and toes, including the nail	1	3	1	½
„ „ arm and hand, including the nails	1	6		10½
„ „ face from the tip of the nose to the base of the ear		9		8
„ „ ear		5½		5

Macropus giganteus, Shaw, Nat. Misc., pl. 33.
Didelphis gigantea, Linn. Syst. Nat. Gmel., p. 109.—Schreb., t. 154.
Kanguroo, Cook's Voy., vol. iii. p. 577. pl. 20.—Phill. Voy., pl. in p. 106.—White's Voy., pl. in p. 272.
Macropus major, Shaw, Gen. Zool., vol. i. p. 305. pl. 115.—Cook's First Voy., vol. iv. p. 45. pl. 2.—Desm. Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat., tom. xvii. p. 33.
Kangurus labiatus, Geoff. Encycl., pl. 21. fig. 4.—Desm. Ency. Méth. Mamm., p. 273.
Boomer, Forester, Old Man Kangaroo of the Colonists, Bundaary of the Aborigines of the Liverpool range.

There can be little doubt of the present species being that noticed by our celebrated navigator Cook, in his voyage round the world in 1770; and as I conceive all information connected with this early-known species will be interesting, I shall commence my account of its history with a quotation from the above-mentioned work.

"On Friday, June the twenty-second, while stationed for a short time on the south-east coast of Australia," says Captain Cook, "a party, who were engaged in shooting pigeons for the use of the sick of the ship, saw an animal, which they described to be 'as large as a greyhound, of a slender make, of a mouse-colour, and extremely swift.' The following day the same kind of animal was again seen by a great many other people. On the twenty-fourth it was seen by Captain Cook himself, who, walking at a little distance from the shore, observed a quadruped, which he thought bore some resemblance to a greyhound, and was of a light mouse-colour, with a long tail, and which he should have taken for a kind of wild dog, had not its extraordinary manner of leaping, instead of running, convinced him of the contrary. Mr. Banks also obtained a transient view of it, and immediately concluded it to be an animal perfectly new and undescribed.

"The sight of a creature so extraordinary could not fail to excite, in the mind of a philosophic observer, the most ardent wishes for a complete examination. These were at length gratified; Mr. Gore, one of the associates in the expedition of Captain Cook, having been so fortunate as to shoot one in the course of a few days."

Such is the earliest notice to be found relative to this fine species, of which living examples were a few years afterwards brought to Europe, and have from time to time formed an interesting addition to our menageries. It is however remarkable, that though it has now been introduced for so long a period, all attempts at naturalizing it have hitherto proved futile; still, from my own observations of the animal in a state of nature, I am led to believe that a small degree of perseverance is alone requisite to effect so desirable an object. Should I be so fortunate as to interest any who have the means, as well as the inclination, in the furtherance of this object, we may yet hope to see our large parks and forests graced with the presence of this highly ornamental and singular animal. That it would bear the severities of our winters is almost beyond a doubt, since in Van Diemen's Land, among other places, it resorts to the bleak, wet, and frequently snow-capped summit of Mount Wellington. The kind of country which appears most suitable to its nature, consists of low grassy hills and plains, skirted by thin open forests of brushwood, to the latter of which, especially on the continent of Australia, it resorts for shelter from the oppressive heat of the mid-day sun. Although the numbers of this large species are becoming greatly reduced in consequence of the intrusion of civilized man, and though it has disappeared from those localities where he has taken up his abode, accompanied by his vast flocks and herds, still the immense tracts of sterile unwatered country which characterize Australia, and present physical obstacles to cultivation, will, in my opinion, for a long period afford a sufficient asylum for the preservation of the race.

It enjoys a wide range of habitat, being spread over the colony of New South Wales, the interior to the northward as far as it has yet been penetrated, as well as the whole of the intermediate country between New South Wales and South Australia, where I observed it tolerably abundant; but I am induced to believe this latter district is almost the boundary of its range westward, although, on this point, I may be in error.

I should consider it as not, strictly speaking, a gregarious animal, as I have never seen more than six or eight together, and have more frequently met with it singly or in pairs. Its senses of smelling and hearing are so exquisite that it is extremely difficult of approach without detection, and to effect this it is always necessary to advance against the wind. It browses upon various kinds of grasses, herbs and low shrubs, a kind of food which renders its flesh well-tasted and nutritive. The early dawn and evening are the periods at which it feeds, and at which it is most certain to be met with.

Although hunted and frequently killed by the Dingo, its most formidable antagonist has hitherto been the Aborigine, who employs several modes of obtaining it; sometimes stealing upon it with the utmost caution under covert of the trees and bushes, until it is within the range of his spear, which is generally thrown with unerring aim; at other times, having discovered their retreat, the natives unite in a party, and, forming a large circle gradually, close in upon them