

2. ON NEW SPECIES OF MAMMALIA AND BIRDS FROM AUSTRALIA. BY J. GOULD, F.R.S., F.Z.S. ETC.

The Proceedings of the Zoological Society having been the means by which the many interesting novelties in Natural History obtained during the surveying voyages of Captains King, Beechey, Belcher, Fitzroy, Blackwood, &c., by the naturalists attached to their several ships, have been made known to the scientific world, a more appropriate channel cannot, I presume, be selected for communicating the interesting results, so far as known, of the expedition now exploring the coasts of Northern and Eastern Australia, under the command of Capt. Owen Stanley; and I therefore hasten to lay before the Society such novelties as have been received in the two branches of natural history to which I have devoted myself, viz. Mammalia and Birds.

The collection recently sent home by Capt. Stanley and Mr. MacGillivray, the able naturalist of H.M.S. 'Rattlesnake,' is a very fine one; it has been procured on what may be considered hitherto untrodden ground, I cannot therefore do better than give a list of the whole,—such lists, showing the geographical distribution of species, being in the highest degree valuable. I have said that the collection is a very fine one, and I must not omit observing that much credit is due to Capt. Stanley for affording the naturalist the requisite opportunities for obtaining so many interesting species; nor is a lesser meed of praise due to Mr. MacGillivray, for the very excellent manner in which the specimens are prepared, and the accuracy with which all the information connected with them that could be obtained has been noted down. The collection of Quadrupeds and Birds only has been placed in my hands for examination, with a view to my publishing such novelties as it may contain in my works on these subjects; after which the specimens are to be sent to the British Museum. The period that has elapsed since the arrival of the collection has been far too short to admit of my investigating the subject as I could wish; I shall therefore, on the present occasion, exhibit some of the species that appear to me to be new, and defer my remarks upon the entire collection to the next or some future meeting of the Society.

I shall now proceed to describe two species of mammalia and two species of birds from this collection, as follows:—

PTEROPUS CONSPICILLATUS, Gould.

Sp. Ch.—Crown of the head black, slightly grizzled with buff; round each eye a large oval patch of deep brownish buff, which advances on the sides of the face and shows very conspicuously; at the nape a broad crescent-shaped band of deep sandy buff, which extends down the sides of the neck and nearly meets on the breast; centre of the back glossy black, slightly grizzled with grey; cheeks, chin, all the under surface and rump, black, slightly grizzled with buff; ears and wing-membranes naked and of a deep purplish black; claws black.

Hab. Fitzroy Island.

This species is about the size of *Pteropus poliocephalus*, but has a

somewhat larger head and much larger and more powerful teeth, and is moreover rendered conspicuously different from that species by the nuchal band being of a deep sandy buff instead of deep rust-red, and not continuous round the neck; by the crown of the head and back being almost jet-black; and the eyes being conspicuously encircled with deep buff (whence the specific name); in which latter character it assimilates to *P. funereus*, but scarcely to any other. Respecting this species Mr. Macgillivray writes: "Is this not new to Australia? It is not *funereus*, of which see skull No. 7 and skin No. 8, nor is it *poliocephalus*. Of its habits I extract the following note from my journal: 'On the wooded slope of a hill on Fitzroy Island I one day fell in with this bat in prodigious numbers, looking while flying along the bright sunshine (so unusual for a nocturnal animal) like a large flock of rooks: on close approach a strong musky odour became apparent, and a loud incessant chattering was heard; many of the branches were bending under their load of bats, some in a state of inactivity suspended by their hind claws, others scrambling along among the boughs and taking to wing when disturbed. In a very short time I procured as many specimens as I wished, three and four at a shot, for they hung in clusters, but unless killed outright they remained suspended for some time: when wounded they are handled with difficulty, as they bite severely, and on such occasions their cry reminds one of the squalling of a child.' "

PHALANGISTA (PSEUDOCHEIRUS) NUDICAUDATA, Gould.

Sp. Ch.—Head, all the upper surface, the sides of the body, and the outer sides of the limbs, brownish grey; the tips of the hairs with a silky appearance; under surface of the neck and body and the inner sides of the limbs pale buff; the colouring of the upper and under surface distinctly defined on the sides of the body, but gradually blending on the limbs, the rump and root of the tail, which is thickly clothed on its basal third and naked for the remainder of its length; hands, feet, and naked portion of the tail pinky flesh-colour.

	inches.
Length from tip of nose to root of tail	12
—— of tail	8
—— of fore-feet, including the nails	3
—— of hind-feet, including the nails	3½

Hab. Cape York, the most northern point of Australia.

This species differs from all the other Australian members of the genus, in having the apical three-fourths of its tail entirely destitute of hair; in the light-coloured mark on the rump, somewhat resembling that on the same part of the Koala; and in its short dense fur and short ears.

The above description and admeasurements are taken from a female said to be about two-thirds grown. The ears are exceedingly short and rounded, and the fur is remarkable for its extreme density and for its resemblance to that of the Koala.







Gould, John. 1850. "On new species of Mammalia and Birds from Australia." *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London* 1849, 109–112.

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