



PELECANUS CONSPICILLATUS, Temm.

Australian Pelican.

Pelecanus conspicillatus, Temm. Pl. Col., 276.—List of Birds in Brit. Mus. Coll., part iii. p. 189.

Ne-rim-ba, Aborigines in the neighbourhood of Perth.

Boo-dee-lung, Aborigines near the Murray.

Of the members of the genus *Pelecanus* the present may be regarded as one of the very finest species ; in size it fully equals its European prototypes the *P. Onocrotalus* and *P. crispus*, and although devoid of crest-plumes, this ornament is fully compensated for by the varied markings of the face and mandibles ; no one species of Pelican would be more ornamental to the aviary, and it is very surprising that living examples should not long ere this have been introduced into Europe. It is so abundant in all the rivers and inlets of the sea, both in Van Diemen's Land and on the continent of Australia, that it is one of the very commonest of the large birds of those countries. I possess specimens shot by myself on Green Island in D'Entrecasteaux' Channel, and I also met with it in abundance in South Port River : owing to the advance of colonization it is now scarce in the Derwent and Tamar, but it still breeds on the small group called Stanner's Bay Islands, lying off the south-western end of Flinders' Island in Bass's Straits. In Australia it is very common on the Hunter as well as in Spencer's and St. Vincent's Gulfs, and on all the waters of the interior, such as the Mokai, Namoi, &c., and on all lakes of sufficient magnitude to afford it a supply of food, consisting principally of fish. So numerous is it on these inland waters, that Captain Sturt states that the channel of a river from seventy to eighty yards broad was literally covered with Pelicans ; and that they were in such numbers upon the Darling as to be quite dazzling to the eye.

The nest is a large structure of sticks and grassy herbage, placed just above high-water mark ; the eggs are generally two in number, of a dirty yellowish white, three inches and three-quarters long by two inches and three-eighths broad.

The entire plumage white, with the exception of the scapularies, a line along the edge of the shoulder, the lower row of the greater wing-coverts, the primaries, secondaries, a few of the upper tail-coverts and the tail, which are black ; on the breast a pale wash of sulphur-yellow ; gular pouch and mandibles yellowish white, the latter stained with blue, which gradually increases in depth to the tip ; apical half of the cutting edges of the mandibles yellow, gradually increasing in depth to the tip ; nail of both mandibles greenish yellow ; irides dark brown ; eyelash indigo-blue ; orbits pale sulphur-yellow, bounded by a narrow ring of pale indigo-blue ; legs and upper part of the tarsi yellowish white ; feet, webs and lower part of the tarsi pale bluish grey, the two colours blending with each other at the middle of the tarsi ; nails dull yellowish white.

The figure rather more than one-fourth of the natural size.



Gould, John. 1848. "Pelecanus conspicillatus, Temm., Australian Pelican, [Pl. 74]." *The birds of Australia* 7, -. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.313480>.

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