NOTE ON THE BIRDS OF TASMANIA.

By Colonel W. V. Legge, F.L.S., &c.

(President of the Australian Ornithological Union.)

Compared with tropical countries, or other regions of similar area, the Island of Tasmania cannot be said to be rich in bird life. There are two apparent causes for our limited avifauna. First, the comparative paucity of fruit-bearing flora and insect-life; secondly, our island being the terminal point of the Australian "region," and separated from it by a strait, does not come in for its share of distribution of species, nor its proportion of northern migrants, which do not wander further than the southern parts of the continent. If, therefore, we confine ourselves to land-birds proper, and eliminate the numerous species of Petrel recorded as inhabiting our seas, the Penguins, the Gulls, and Terns (Gaviæ), the geese and ducks (Anseres), the Plovers and snipe-like birds (Limicolæ), and, finally, the Herons (Ardeidæ), there remains but a small list, even if we include the Rails, Coots, Cormorants, and Grebes. To the casual observer, however, who may wander through the open, settled country in the South, Midlands, Western, and Coast districts (not including the West), our feathered friends would seem to be fairly numerous; for it is in territory of this sort that the majority of our species are to be found. It suits the habits, and provides food, for the parakeets, the various honey-eaters, small fly-catching birds (among which the showy chat-robinis are conspicuous), tree-tits, Acanthiza, the diamond birds (Dicæidæ), and various other small Passe- rine birds, frequenting open country in preference to forest. On the other hand, in the dense and lofty forests, birds are few and far between, except in small tracts of land bordering creeks and rivers in the gullies, which are clothed with luxuriant scrub, and where insect life is more abundant. Again, if we penetrate the dense mountain forests of myrtle (Fagus cunninghami), in the West of the island, we find the almost impenetrable scrub and tangled undergrowth
absolutely unfavourable to bird life, and miles of this true and most formidable "jungle" may be struggled through without a single species being met with. Very little, indeed, is known as yet concerning the avifauna of the densely-clothed mountains of the western half of the country, where the dark and humid forests which fill the gullies and cover the sides of the ranges are suited to the habits of such birds only as the scrub-wren (Sericornis humilis), migratory fly-catchers (Myiagra), one or two of the thick-heads (Pachycephala), also the forest-loving honey-eater (Melithreptus), and, finally, the black crowshrikes, or magpies, whose far-reaching notes always betray their presence. In addition to these denizens of the trackless Western forests, we find the bold and lofty mountain-tops, which stand out of the wilderness in lonely grandeur, furnishing a home for certain raptorial species, such as the White and the Australian goshawks, the Black-cheeked Falcon, and the Hobby (Falco Lunatus), while around the borders of the solitary tarns and lakes, which sparkle on their plateau summits, the ubiquitous Pipit (Anthus australis) is usually found, with, near at hand, one or two wandering honey-eaters, if the Alpine flora happens to be in flower.

In the Midlands, already referred to in connection with the Passerine birds above-mentioned, we have the stronghold of the few species of plover found in Tasmania, accompanied in summer by the migratory Golden Plover, which visits us from Northern Asia; and, round the large lagoons and salt-pans characteristic of the district, the Double-banded Dottrel, and some rare species of waders are occasionally met with. Higher up on the open stock-runs, with alternating plains and scattered timber-tracts, the marsh Harrier (Circus assimilis), the Brown Hawk (both also common in the lowlands), and many of the commoner low-country species are usually seen; and here, too, that grand but predatory bird, the Wedge-tailed Eagle, the bête-noir of the pastoralist, is sure to be seen, either perched on some lofty tree or soaring at immense heights above the landscape.

In 1845, a carefully-compiled list of Tasmanian birds was submitted by the Rev. J. T. Ewing, at a meeting of the Royal Society, and published in its Proceedings for that year. Mr. Ewing was a keen observer of birds and their habits, and was a contemporary of Gould’s while this great naturalist was in Australia. His list was exclusively compiled from Gould’s work, supplemented by a few species observed by himself. A Tit found by Gould in Tasmania was named after Ewing (Acanthiza ewingi), but it has since been
considered identical with the well-known "Brown-tail" (A. diemenensis). It is not, however, certain that this is correct, as further research may lead to the rediscovery of Ewing's Tit. Subsequent to the publication of Ewing's list others have been printed, and used for reference, but up till late years scarcely any additions were made to the 169 birds enumerated in the first-named.

In 1886, a "Systematic List" was drawn up by myself, the various orders, families, and sub-families into which our birds are divided being classified on the same system as that adopted in my "Birds of Ceylon." This list has now been revised, and included in this "Note." The now universally-received nomenclature of the "British Museum Catalogue" has been used, and the vernacular names adopted in the Australasian Association List of 1898 given to our birds. It is to be hoped that, in future, naturalists and collectors will adhere to the names in question, which are the result of much thought and care on the part of the compilers.

If we compare the number of the members of the various families and orders given in the list with those inhabiting the continent, we see at a glance how far the Australian avifauna is represented in our Island:—Birds of prey are fairly numerous, the proportion of species in Tasmania being 12 to 27 in Australia, not inclusive, however, of the owls, which are only 3 to 14; fly-catchers (Muscicapidae) number 8 species out of 67, which is a poor representation, one, the Fantail, being peculiar to the Island. Honey-eaters (Meliphagidae) are also indifferently represented, our quota being 10 out of 82. In the parrot "order," Tasmania has 12 species out of 59. Passing to shore birds (plovers, dot-terels, curlews, &c.), we find 23 in Tasmania out of a total of 46 recorded for Australia, which is a better representation than that of any order but petrels, of which we have 27 species out of 38 as yet noted from Australasian seas, this being accounted for by the fact that these birds are wanderers over all the Southern Ocean.

In some instances, for simplification, genera adopted in the British Museum Catalogue have not been made use of in the following List:—
SYSTEMATIC LIST OF TASMANIAN BIRDS.

Order **ACCIPITRES**.

Suborder **Falcones**.

Family **FALCONIDÆ**—(11 species).

Subfam. **ACCIPITRINÆ**.

- *Circus Gouldi, Bonap.* Allied Harrier (Swamp-hawk).
- *Circus assimilis, Jard & Selby.* Jardines Harrier.
- *Astur Novaë Hollandiae, Gmelin.* White Goshawk.
- *Astur approximate, Vigors & Horsf.* Australian Goshawk.
- *Accipiter cirrhocephalus, Vieillot.* Sparrow-hawk.

Subfam. **AQUILINÆ**.

- *Uroætus audax, Latham.* Wedge-tailed Eagle.
- *Haliætus leucogaster, Gmelin.* Grey-backed Sea Eagle

Subfam. **FALCONINÆ**.

- *Falco lunulatus, Latham.* Australian Hobby.
- *Cerchneis cenchroides, Vig. & Horsf.* Australian Kestrel.

Suborder **Pandiones**.

- *Pandion leucocephalus, Gould.* Australian Osprey.

Suborder **Striges**.

Family **BUBONIDÆ**—(2 species).

Subfam. **BUBONINÆ**.

- *Ninox boobook, Latham.* Brown Hawk-owl.
- *Ninox maculata, Vig. & Horsf.* Spotted Hawk-owl.

Family **STRIGIDÆ**—(1 species).

- *Strix castanops, Gould.* Tasmanian Barn-owl.
Order **PICARIAE.**

Family **CUCULIDAe**—(6 species).

Subfam. **CUCULINAE.**

- [Cuculus pallidus, *Latham.*] Pallid Cuckoo.
- [Cuculus flabelliformis, *Latham.*] Fantailed Cuckoo.
- [Chalcococcyx plagiocerus, *Latham.*] Bronze Cuckoo.
- [Chalcococcyx basalis, *Horsfield.*] Narrow-billed Bronze Cuckoo.
- [Chalcococcyx lucidus, *Gmelin.*] Broad-billed Bronze Cuckoo.

Subfam. **PHENICOPHAINAE.**


Subfam. **HALCYONINAE.**

- [Halcyon sanctus, *Vig. & Horsf.*] Sacred Kingfisher.

Subfam. **ALCEDININAE.**


Family **CYPSELIDAE**—(1 species).

- [Chaetura caudacuta, *Latham.*] Spine-tailed Swift.

Family **CAPRIMULGIDAE**—(2 species).

Subfam. **STEATORNIINAE.**


Subfam. **CAPRIMUIGINAE.**


Order **PASSERES.**

Section A. **TURUSH-LIKE PASSERES.**

(10 primaries, 1st small.)

Family **CORVIDAE**—(4 species).

Subfam. **CORVINAE.**

- [Corvus coroneoides, *Vig. & Horsf.*] Australian Raven.

Family **DICRURIDAE**—(1 species).

- [Chibia bracteata, *Gould.*] Drongo.

Family **CAMPOPHAGIDAE**—(2 species).


* Accidental.
Family **PRIONOPIDÆ**. (2 species).

Collyriocincla rectirostris, *Jard* Whistling Shrike-
& *Selby.*

Family **LANIIDÆ**—(5 species).

Subfam. **GYMNORHININÆ.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gymnorhina hyperleuca,</td>
<td>Gould</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cracticus cinereus,</td>
<td>Gould</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magpie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butcher-bird (Jack-ass)</td>
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Subfam. **PACHYCEPHALINÆ.**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pachycephala olivacea,</td>
<td>Vig &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pachycephala gutturalis,</td>
<td>Lath.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive Thickhead</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>White-throated Thick-head</td>
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Family—**MUSCICAPIDÆ**—(8 species).

Subfam. **MUSCICAPINÆ.**

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<tr>
<td>Rhipidura Diemenensis,</td>
<td>Sharpe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myiagra rubecula,</td>
<td>Lath.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myiagra nitida,</td>
<td>Gould.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fantail</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leaden Flycatcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Satin Flycatcher</td>
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Subfam. **SAXICOLINÆ.**

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<tr>
<td>Petraea Leggi,</td>
<td>Sharpe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petraea Phoenicea,</td>
<td>Gould.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarlet-breasted Robin</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Flame-breasted Robin</td>
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Subfam. **TURDINÆ.**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geocichla macrorhyncha,</td>
<td>Gould.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Thrush</td>
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Subfam. **SYLVIINÆ.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acrocephalus Australis,</td>
<td>Gould.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reed Warbler</td>
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Subfam. **EPHTHIANURINÆ.**

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<th>Species</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ephthianura albifrons,</td>
<td>Jard &amp;</td>
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<tr>
<td>White-fronted Chat-Selby</td>
<td></td>
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Family **TIMELIIDÆ**—(8 species).

Subfam. **CRATERPODINÆ.**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Species</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cinclosoma punctatum,</td>
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<td>The Ground Bird</td>
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Subfam. **TIMALIINÆ.**

<table>
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<th>Species</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calamanthus ful nosus,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Striated Field Wren</td>
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Subfam. **BRACHPYTERINÆ.**

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Megalurus gramineus,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grass Bird</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stipiturus malachurus,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emu Wren</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Accidental.
Subfam. Acanthizinae.

Acanthiza chrysorrhoa, Q. & G. Yellow-rumped Tit (Yellow Tail).

Family MELIPHAGIDÆ—(10 species).

Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris, Lath. Spine Bill.
Melithreptus validirostris, Gould. Strong-billed Honey-eater.
Glycyphila fulvifrons, Lewin. Tawny-crowned Honey-eater.
Ptilotis flavicularis, Gould. Yellow-throated Honey-eater.
Meliornis Novae Hollandiae, Lath. White-bearded Honey-eater.
Meliornis Australasiana, Shaw. Crescent Honey-eater.
Manorhina garrula, Lath. Garrulous Honey-eater (Miner).

Section B.

Swallow-Jike Passeres.
(9 Primaries.)

Family ZOSTEROPIDÆ—(1 species).
Zosterops caerulescens, Lath. White-eye.

Family DICAELIDÆ—(3 species).
Pardalotus punctatus, Shaw and Diamond Bird. Nodder.
Pardalotus affinis, Gould. Yellow-tipped Diamond Bird.

Family HIRUNDINIDÆ—(2 species).
Petrochelidon nigricans, Vieill. Tree Martin.

Family FRINGILLIDÆ.

Zonaeinthus bellus, Lath. Fire-tailed Finch.

Family MOTACILLIDÆ—(1 species).
Anthus Australis, Vig & Horsf. Pipit.
Section B.

**Starling-like Passeres.**

(10 Primaries, 1st Rudimentary).

Family ARTAMIDÆ—(1 species).

*Artamus sordidus, Lath.* Wood Swallow.

Order **PSITTACI.**

Family CACATUIDÆ—(3 species).

*Cacatua galerita, Latham.* White Cockatoo.
*Calyptorhynchus xanthocephalus, Gould.* Black Cockatoo.
*Callocephalon galactum, Latham.* Gang-gang Cockatoo.

Family PSITTACIDÆ—(6 species).

*Platycercus flaviventris, Temminck.* Green Parrakeet.
*Platycercus eximius, Shaw.* Rosehill Parrakeet.
*Neophema venusta, Temminck.* Blue-banded Grass Parrakeet.
*Neophema chrysogastra, Latham.* Orange-bellied Grass Parrakeet.
*Nanodes discolor, Shaw.* Swift Parrakeet.
*Pezoporus formosus, Latham.* Ground Parrakeet.

Family TRICHOGLOSSIDÆ—(3 species).

*Trichoglossus, Novae Hollandiae,* Blue-bellied Lorikeet.
*Glossopsittacus concinnus, Shaw.* Musk Lorikeet.
*Glossopsittacus pusillus, Shaw.* Little Lorikeet.

Order **COLUMBÆ.**

Family GOURIDÆ—(2 species).

*Phaps chalcoptera, Latham.* Bronze-wing.
*Phaps elegans, Temminck.* Brush Bronze-wing.

Family TRERONIDÆ—(2 species).

*a* Lamprotorron superbus, Temm. Superb Fruit Pigeon.
*a* Lopholaimus antarcticus, Shaw. Topknot Pigeon.

Order **GALLINÆ.**

Family TETRAONIDÆ—(2 species).

*Coturnix pectoralis, Gould.* Stubble Quail.
*Synoicus Diemenensis, Gould.* Great Brown or Swamp Quail.
*Synoicus Australis, Latham.* Brown Quail.

*a* Accidental.
Family TURNICIDÆ—(1 species).
   Turnix varius, Latham. Painted Quail.

Order FULICARIAE.

Family RALLIDÆ—(8 species).
   Porphyrio melanotus, Temm. Blue Coot.
   Hypotaenidia phillipinensis, Cuvier. Pectoral Rail.
   Hypotaenidia brachypus, Swainson. Short-toed Rail.
   Porzana fluminea, Gould. Spotted Crake.
   Porzana palustris, Gould. Little Crake.
   Porzana tabuensis, Gmelin. Red-backed Crake.

Order LIMICOLÆ.

Family OEDICNEMIDÆ—(1 species).
   Burhinus grallarius, Latham. Stone Plover.

Family CHARADRIIDÆ—(22 species).

Sub-Fam. Hæmatopodinae.
   Hæmatopus longirostris, Vieill. White-breasted Oyster Catcher.
   Hæmatopus unicolor, Wagler. Sooty Oyster Catcher.

   { Lobivanellus lobatus, Latham. Wattled Plover
      Squatarola Helvetica, Linn. (Spurwing.)
      Charadrius fulvus, Gmelin. Grey Plover.
      Ægialitis bicincta, Jard. & Selby. Golden Plover.

      Ægialitis monacha, Geoffroy. Double-banded Sand Plover.
      Ægialitis ruficapilla, Temm. Hooded Sand Plover.


      Tringoides hypoleucos. Green-shank.

      Tringa accuminata, Horst. Curlew Stint.

      Tringa rufigollis, Pallas. Marsh Stint.
      Strepsilas interpres, Linn. Red-breasted Stint.
      Numenius cyanopus, Vieillott. Turnstone.
      Numenius phæopus, Linn. Australian Curlew.

Sub-Fam. Charadriinæ.

Sub-Fam. Scolopacinae.
   The Whimbrel.
BIRDS OF TASMANIA.

Subfam

HIMANTOPIDÆ.

Himantopus leucocephalus, White-headed Stilt.

Cladorhynchus pectoralis, Dubus. Banded Stilt.


Order GAVIAE.

Family LARIDE—(8 species).

Sterna (Hydroprogne) caspia, Pallas. Caspian Tern.


Sterna frontalis, Gray. Black-billed Tern.

Sterna nereis, Gould. White-faced Ternlet

Larus (Gabianus) pacificus, Pacific Gull.

Larus Novæ Hollandiæ, Stephens. Little Gull.

Order TUBINARES.

Family DIOMEDEIDÆ—(6 species).

Diomedea exulans, Linn. Wandering Albatross.


Thalassogeron culminatus, Gould. Flat-billed Albatross.

Diomedea melanophrus, Temm. Black-browed Albatross.

Thalassogeron chlororhynchus, Green-billed Albatross.

Pheucteria fuliginosa, Gmelin. Sooty Albatross.

Family PUFFINIDÆ*—(16 species).

Ossifraga gigantea, Gmelin. Giant Petrel.

Daption capensis, Linn. Cape Petrel.

Halobema caerulea, Gmelin. Blue Petrel.

Prion desolatus (turtur), Banks. Dove Prion.


Prion vittatus Illiger. Broad-billed Prion.

Majaqueus equinoccialis, Linn. Spectacled Petrel.

†Priófinus cinereus, Gmelin. Grey Petrel.

Pterodroma macroptera, Smith. Long-winged Petrel

Pterodroma atlantica, Gould. Atlantic Petrel.


Estrelata Lessonii, Gurn. White-headed Petrel.


Puffinus tenuirostris, Brandt. Short-tailed Petrel (Mutton Bird).

Priocella glacialoides, Smith. Silver-grey Petrel.

* I have not included Forster's Petrel. I am not aware of it having been procured in Tasmanian seas.
† Grey Petrel more suitable than "Brown."—("Vernacular List")
Family PROCELLARIIDÆ—(6 species).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subfam.</th>
<th>Oceanitine.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cymodroma grallaria, Vieill.</td>
<td>White-bellied Storm Petrel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pelagodroma marina, Lath.</td>
<td>White-faced Storm Petrel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceanites oceanicus, Kuhl.</td>
<td>Yellow-footed Storm Petrel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halodroma urinatrix, Lath.</td>
<td>Diving Petrel.</td>
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Order STEGANOPODES.

Family PELECANIDÆ—(1 species).

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pelecanus conspicillatus, Temm.</td>
<td>Pelican.</td>
</tr>
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Family PHALACROCORACIDÆ—(4 species.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phalacrocorax melanoleucos, Vieill.</td>
<td>Little Cormorant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phalacrocorax strictocephalus.</td>
<td>Little Black Cormorant.</td>
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Family SULIDÆ—(1 species).

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sula serrator, Banks.</td>
<td>Australian Gannet.</td>
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Order ANSERES.

Family ANATIDÆ—(14 species).

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cereopsis Nova Hollandiæ, Lath.</td>
<td>Cape Barren Goose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chenonetta jubata, Lath.</td>
<td>Maned Goose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dendrocygna eytoni, Gould.</td>
<td>Eyton's Tree Duck.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tadorna tadornoides, Jard. &amp; Selby.</td>
<td>Ruddy Sheldrake.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stictonetta nevosa, Gould.</td>
<td>Freckled Duck.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anas superciliosa, Gmelin.</td>
<td>Wild Duck.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatula rhynchos, Lath.</td>
<td>Australian Shoveller.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malacorhynchus membranaceus, Swains.</td>
<td>Membranaceus Duck.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erismatura Australis.</td>
<td>Blue-billed Duck.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Subfam. Fuligulinae.

Subfam. Erismaturinae.
  } Biziura lobata, Shaw. Musk Duck.

Order HERODIONES.

Family ARDEIDÆ—(6 species).
  Notophoyx Pacifica, Lath. Pacific Heron.
  Notophoyx Novæ Hollandæ, Lath. White-fronted Heron.
  Demiegretta sacra, Gmelin. The Reef Heron.
  Herodias Timoriensis, Lesson. White Egret.
  Nycticorax Caledonicus, Lath. Night Heron.

Order PYGOPODES.

Family PODICIPIDÆ—(3 species).
  Podiceps Cristatus, Gould. Tippet Grebe.
  Podiceps Novæ Hollandæ. Little Grebe.

Order IMPENNES.

Family SPHENISCIDÆ—(3 species).
  Catarractes chrysocome, Lath. Crested Penguin
  Eudyptula minor, Forster. Little Penguin.