

Order Psittaciformes, Family Loriidae, Genus
Glossopsitta.

Glossopsitta porphyrocephala Dietrichson (Purple-crowned Lorikeet).

Description. — Frontal band and lores, shading from yellow to deep red; ear coverts, red tipped with yellow; back of the head and neck, bright green shading into yellowish brown on the back; crown of the head very dark purple; wing and tail coverts as well as rump, bright grass green; inside wing, crimson; shoulder, light blue; primaries, blackish brown, margined externally with bright green, edged with yellow; tail, green on upper surface, yellow beneath; throat and under surface, bluish green,

with orange and red markings on flanks; under tail coverts, green; iris, brown; feet, ashy grey; bill, black.

Measurements.—In the flesh, total length, 180 m.m.; wing from body to tip, 136 m.m.; spread, 305 m.m.; tarsus, 12 m.m.; bill, 12 m.m. Little or no difference in sexes.

Distribution.—New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, including Kangaroo Island. The bird found in West Australia has been separated into a sub-species.

Habits.—Noisy, gregarious birds. Of the Lorikeets in South Australia this is the best known for it congregates in great flocks at times, and shifts about according to food supply; when the Eucalypts have finished blooming in one district these birds will disappear and find trees in blossom at a great distance. Just before dark they will start off for a fast fly, rising and falling, twisting and turning on very swift wing, then circle back to where they started from and dart into their favourite roosting tree for the night.

Nest.—No nest is made, the two to five round white eggs are laid on the bare wood of a hollow limb, hundreds of pairs nesting at times in the one locality, taking possession of all the hollow limbs of the Eucalypts for quite a distance round. Nesting season varies in different localities, from August to November.

Eggs.—The eggs are quite white, and rounded in shape. Average measurement of eleven eggs, 2.13 c.m. x 1.77 c.m.; largest egg, 2.15 x 1.80; smallest egg, 2.0 x 1.70.

Flight.—Very swift and long sustained.

Food.—Consisting of honey, varied at times by the seeds of Eucalypts.

Note.—Very shrill and piercing. All the time these birds are feeding, crawling from one blossom to another, or hanging head downwards they are giving forth their shrill calls. They also call a great deal when upon the wing.

Habitat.—They will be found wherever the trees are in blossom, be it open timber country or thick forest, and are to be found more often than not with other members of the brush-tongued parrots.
