

A Now Rare Bird.

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The Swift Lorikeet (*Lathamus discolor tregellasi*) visits South Australia at rather rare intervals. I have one which I shot near Burnside in 1862, in which year they were rather numerous. It was then about seven years since I had observed them. Subsequently I have several times seen them in the neighbourhood, the last time noted by me being in 1882, when they were plentiful about the gum trees: one flock that I saw—a particularly large one—containing perhaps nearly 100 birds. The name of Swift Lorikeet, anyone who has observed a flock dash past within a few yards of him will agree, is very appropriate. Though not the most brilliant in colour, it is one of the most beautiful of the Lorikeets. They are very common in Tasmania. When I was at Hobart in 1878 the curator of the Museum there, told me that they came in great numbers when the blue gum trees were in blossom. One of these trees grew near the building, which had windows directly opposite one another, and the Lorikeets would sometimes dash against the clear glass and disable themselves. I have never seen this bird tamed here, though I saw some living specimens in the London Zoological Gardens in 1865. In the same year I went to Gould's place of business to inquire about the "Handbook" which I heard had just been published. In the office were hung a number of the original drawings of his birds and mammals, and among them I saw the representation of this species. Gould had not seen the bird in South Australia, nor was he aware that it visited our colony. The Swift Lorikeet, unlike most of the honey-eating parrots, has a smooth tongue. The upper surface is dark green, the under part pale green; top of head dark blue; forehead, cheeks, and throat, pink; shoulders maroon-red, passing into rich scarlet under wings; the tail, which is pointed, has a chocolate hue on the upper side. Total length $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the tail being 5 inches.