

DESCRIPTION OF THE EGGS OF THE WHITE-QUILLED
ROCK PIGEON, *PETROPHASSA ALBIPENNIS*, GOULD.

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The White-quilled Rock Pigeon is the rarest of the *Australian Columbae*. The only specimens recorded are those sent by one of the officers of "H.M.S. Beagle" to Gould. Others were procured by the late Mr. M. Elsey, and by the late Sir George Grey in North-western Australia. For an opportunity of describing the eggs of this species I am indebted to Mr. C. G. Gibson, who took two sets of eggs and forwarded them to me together with the following interesting notes:—"While in the West Kimberley District, North-western Australia, in 1901, with the Brockman exploration expedition, to which party I was attached as Assistant-Geologist, we noticed numbers of *Petrophassa albipennis*. They were invariably restricted to the sandstone region, and although fairly numerous, they were never anywhere abundant. As a rule they were rather shy birds, and hard to flush, relying on their protective colour to hide them. When flushed they would rise with a loud whirr, fly a short distance, alighting usually on bare rocks, over which they would run rapidly for a few yards, finally crouching down on a rock harmonising with their own colour so much that it was difficult to detect them. During the month of July, 1901, while in about Lat. 16° 17' S. and Long. 125° 21' E. I found two nests of this Pigeon, one on the 3rd July, the other on the 4th, each containing two fresh eggs, but unfortunately broke one egg of the last set taken. The nests were slight hollows about two inches in depth scooped in the ground, and lined with dead soft grass. One was sheltered beside a small tuft of soft spinifex, the other beside a stone. These nests and eggs are very similar to those of *Geophaps smithi*, of which I found two nests with eggs in the same locality on the 3rd and 4th of July."

The eggs of *Petrophassa albipennis* are oval in form, the shell being close-grained, smooth, and lustrous. One set is of a light cream colour, and measures:—Length (A) 1·16 × 0·86 inches; (B) 1·07 × 0·83 inches. The remaining egg of the second set taken is creamy white in colour, and measures:—Length 1·11 × 0·84 inches.