

# John Gilbert's specimens database

## Fields available to search and what they refer to

**Museum Collection:** the museum holding the specimen and the museum location.

**Accession number:** the museum's official acronym and the accession number of the specimen.

**Verreaux number:** Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, Philadelphia only. The number as given for this specimen in their manuscript catalogue of Gould's Australian Collection by the Verreaux Brothers of Paris. This collection is now in ANSP.

**Subsidiary number:** any other number noted which is not the official accession number.

**Second subsidiary number:** another number noted which is not the official accession number.

**GMCM:** Natural History Museum, London, Mammal Section only. The number given to this specimen by John Gray in Gray's Manuscript Catalogue of Mammalia, which held in the Mammal Section of the NHM.

**GERM:** Natural History Museum, London, Mammal Section only. The number given to this specimen by John Gray in Gray's Early Register of Mammalia, a manuscript catalogue held in the Mammal Section of the NHM.

**Skull accession number:** Natural History Museum, London, Mammal Section only. Separate accession numbers were routinely given to skulls from mammal specimens accessioned by the Natural History Museum.

**Thomas 1888 reference:** Natural History Museum, London, Mammal Section only. Page number and the letter of the alphabet allocated to this specimen as given in Oldfield Thomas's *Catalogue of the Marsupialia and Monotremata in the collection of the British Museum (Natural History)*, 1888.

**Gunther/Other NHM Fish Ref:** Natural History Museum, London, Fish Section only. Page number and the letter of the alphabet allocated to this specimen, as given in Albert Gunther's *Catalogue of fishes in the collection of the British Museum*, volumes 1-8. 1859-1870. Sometimes the old drawer reference is also given.

**Class:** taxonomic rank, e.g. Mammalia (mammals), Aves (birds), Mollusca (shells).

**Classification code:** a sometimes eccentric code devised by Clemency Fisher in order to run the entire database in taxonomic order.

**Family:** taxonomic rank, e.g. Ardeidae (heron family), Muridae (mice), Melanotaeniidae (rainbow fish).

**Genus:** taxonomic rank, e.g. Chalcites (bronze-cuckoos), Psophodes (whip-birds), Rattus (true rats).

**Species:** taxonomic rank, e.g. *Chalcites basalis* (Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo), *Psophodes olivaceus* (Eastern Whip-bird), *Rattus fuscipes* (Bush Rat).

**Sub-species:** taxonomic rank, e.g. *Lichenostomus melanops cassidix* (the helmeted form of the Yellow-tufted Honeyeater).

**Author:** author of the species or subspecies, as recorded in the literature.

**Author date:** date the species or subspecies was first described.

**Verreaux genus Name:** Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, Philadelphia only. The genus name as given for this specimen in their manuscript catalogue of Gould's Australian Collection by the Verreaux Brothers of Paris. This collection is now in ANSP.

**Verreaux species Name:** Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, Philadelphia only. The species name as given for this specimen in their manuscript catalogue of Gould's Australian Collection by the Verreaux Brothers of Paris. This collection is now in ANSP.

**Aboriginal or Colonial name as used by Gilbert:** Gilbert often gave the Aboriginal name for a particular species in his notes, and sometimes also recorded the name the early British colonists gave to Australian species, often inappropriately reminiscent of species they knew back in Britain. John Gould usually gave these names directly under the headings for species depicted in his published works *The birds* and *The mammals of Australia*.

**Common name:** common name, e.g. Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo, Yellow-tufted Honeyeater, as given in the most modern references for a particular group of species.

**Type status:** type status as determined by Clemency Fisher after reviewing the specimen and its previously recorded type status. This may involve changing a published reference - for instance Witmer Stone designated the type of the Elegant Parrot *Nanodes elegans* Gould, 1837 as ANSP 22932, but this is from Western Australia and the type is probably a South Australian bird which has not yet been located.

**Type status in Register:** type status as recorded in the particular institution's Register, if recorded.

**Stone:** Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, Philadelphia only. Type status as listed in Witmer Stone and Gregory Mathews' *A list of the species of Australian birds described by John Gould, with the locality of the type-specimens* (1913), with the relevant page number.

**De Schauensee:** Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, Philadelphia only. Type status as listed in Rodolfe Meyer de Schauensee's *On some avian types, principally Gould's, in the collection of the Academy* (1957), with the relevant page number.

**Type status for which scientific name:** exact name and publication date which the type specimen relates to, e.g. *Nanodes elegans* Gould, 1837. This is often different to the modern name (i.e. this name is now reduced to a synonym).

**Type publication:** the exact reference for the original published type description, with the type locality as in the type description.

**Sex:** where this is recorded, or where this is obvious from the specimen.

**Verreaux sex:** Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, Philadelphia only. Sex as given for this specimen in their manuscript catalogue of Gould's Australian Collection by the Verreaux Brothers of Paris. This collection is now in ANSP.

**Age:** age of specimen as recorded, or where this is obvious from the specimen.

**Verreaux age:** Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, Philadelphia only. Age as given for this specimen in their manuscript catalogue of Gould's Australian Collection by the Verreaux Brothers of Paris. This collection is now in ANSP.

**Collected by:** collector's name where known. If this is assumed then there is a square bracket at the end.

**Locality:** collecting locality as recorded, or as inferred by Clemency Fisher (in which case there is a square bracket at the end).

**Verreaux locality:** Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, Philadelphia only. The collecting locality as given for this specimen in their manuscript catalogue of Gould's Australian Collection by the Verreaux Brothers of Paris. This collection is now in ANSP.

**Date collected:** date of collection of the specimen as recorded, or as inferred by Clemency Fisher (in which case there is a square bracket at the end).

**Indexable date:** where a complete collecting date (e.g. 20<sup>th</sup> December 1838) is given for a John Gilbert specimen, this has been indexed (e.g. 20/12/1838) in a separate field in order to help with Gilbert's chronology, which is also now posted online but which will be updated from time to time. We are not sure the word "indexable" is valid, but it seems to explain things.

**Gilbert's writing on original label:** the exact wording on Gilbert's, or another collector's, original label if this is extant, or their writing on an egg (or sometimes even on the cardboard backing of a halved, dried fish). Sometimes the original labels have been removed but the data copied onto another label, or even written under the stand of a mounted specimen, in which case this has also been recorded here. The wording on other original labels, for instance those attached by John Gould's secretary Edwin Prince, has also been recorded here.

**Gilbert's field collection number:** Gilbert often recorded a number, associated with a particular species rather than with a particular specimen, on his original label. He recorded these numbers much more with mammals than anything else, so for instance two Brush-tailed Phascogales (BMNH 1844.2.15.19 and BMNH 1844.7.9.8) which Gilbert collected in Western Australia both have "No 12" on their original label. Gilbert appears to have started his numbering system again depending which part of Australia he was in, so this is recorded in brackets after the number (e.g. "WA collection").

**Mentioned in Gould's "The birds", or "The mammals of Australia":** Gould often gave details of Gilbert's specimens in these publications: where they were collected, the ecology and behaviour of the species, details of breeding and so on, details taken from Gilbert's long and meticulous field notes. Entries in this field are a work in progress.

**Preparation:** form of specimen, e.g. skin, mount, skull, or in many cases "unknown" as the specimen has not been found, or is yet to be seen. In the case of Gilbert's dried fish specimen this field can get complicated, e.g. "stuffed right hand side with metal hanger, padded".

**Description:** remarks on particular aspects of the specimen, for instance the fish mentioned above in "Preparation" has this entry under "Description": "Has been hand coloured with green background and spots". With eggs this field is used to record the location of the blow holes. Bird plumages such as winter or breeding dress are also recorded here.

**Measurements:** standard measurements of the specimen where these have been taken. Other published measurements of a particular specimen have also been recorded.

**Type measurements:** measurements as given in the original type description.

**Donor 1:** the most recent donor or seller of the specimen, where known

**Donor 2:** the secondary donor or seller of the specimen, where indicated.

**Donor 3:** the original donor or seller of the specimen, where indicated.

**Donation Date:** date of donation or purchase from the most recent source.

**Donation Date2:** date of donation or purchase from a secondary source.

**Donation Date3:** date of donation or purchase from the original source.

**Home location:** museum's storage code, e.g. cabinet / drawer number where known.

**Condition:** condition of the specimen, e.g. "neck broken" (Black-tailed Godwit skin), "Leaking sawdust" (a stuffed Blue Tuskfish).

**Condition Date:** date the condition of the specimen was noted.

**Notes:** further notes on the specimen, or its type status, or on a myriad of other matters. These notes can be extensive.

**Images:** does an image exist?

**Image Filename:** if an image does exist, what file name does it have?

**Linked publications:** if this specimen has been included in another publication, this is recorded, with the page number. This field is a work in progress.

**Leiden Reference:** the John Gould collection at *Naturalis*, Leiden, the national natural history collection of The Netherlands. If this specimen is listed in any of the *Naturalis* bird or mammal type lists, or in another published list such as the *Catalogue of the Museum d'histoire de Pays Bas*, or in a card index or other departmental list, this is recorded here.

**Leiden Collection:** if the specimen has been found, then details are recorded here.

**Leiden Gould List:** If the specimen is, or appears to be, included on either of John Gould's lists of 1840-41 or 1851, then this is recorded here.

My thanks go to National Museum Liverpool's Senior Application Support Analyst Kathy Lovatt, without whom this database would be hardly useful at all. CTF.