

TROCHILUS COLUBRIS.

CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Rostrum subulato-filiforme, apice tubulato, capite longius : Mandibula superior vaginans inferiorem.

Lingua filiformis, filis duobus coalitis tubulosa.

Pedes ambulatorii.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 189.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS, &c.

TROCHILUS rectirostris viridi-aureus, rectricibus nigris, lateralibus tribus ferrugineis apice albis, gula flammea.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 191.

MELLIVORA gula rubra.

Edw. Av. t. 36.

MELLIVORA Avis Carolinensis.

Catesb. Carol. 1. p. 65.

Coloribus nitidis adeo gemmeisque exornatur minimum Trochili genus, ut si cum his comparantur, non modo fordeant prorsus et obscurentur avium plurium regiones calidiores incolentium venustissimi colores, sed et aurum ipsum pyropusque longe superentur. Nequeunt igitur ulla arte splendidissimi hi colores ad

G g

vivum

vivum exprimi, quæ tum sane magnum præstitit, si insigne harum avium decus imitando adumbraverit. *Regulus cristatus Europæus* avicula omnium minima diu habebatur, et stupebant prorsus nostrates physici, cum aves Americanas vel ipsis infectis Europeis minores conspicerent; inter quas est *Trochilus* vix scarabæo vulgari major. Cum tamen minuta hæc species cæteris cedat colorum splendoribus, fatius duxi aliam eamque elegantiores exprimere.

Formosissima hæc avicula plurimas Americæ partes, *Carolinam* præcipue tam Septentrionalem quam Australem inhabitat. Rostrum illi nigrum est. Corporis superiora splendent aureo-viridi, et mutabili colore. Gulam decorant plumæ coccineæ nitidissimæ, quæ pro lucis ratione in aureum fulgentissimum transeunt. Pectus et abdomen albicant. Alarum remigeo fusco-purpurei. Feminæ superficies inferior albicat, carens omnino rubore illo eximio quo mas insignitur. Miranda est huic aviculæ pennarum velocitas. Inter volandum cibum capit phalænæ more, linguam nempe tubulatam in fundum florum immergens et mel inde exugens. Pugnacissimo est ingenio, nec raro de eodem flore acerrime dimicatur. In domus frequenter involat *Trochilus*, cumque, more insectorum Europæorum, tres quatuorve gyros egerit, dicto citius e fenestris effugit. Ubi densissima est arborum coma nidificat, plerumque inter furcas ramulorum. Diametros interna nido est uncia, profunditasque uncia dimidiata: tomento, seu lanugine plantarum intus struitur, extrinsecus musco et lichene stipatur. Ova tantum duo deponit hæc avis, alba, magnitudine pisorum. Dum incubat

incubat foetusque promovet, audacia est incredibili, et in defendendis pullis sæpius ipsas aves majores ad arborem accedentes invadit, et in fugam vertit. Nullam aliam vocem præter stridorem parvum emittit; susurrus enim iste, quem sono apum aut muscarum similem inter volandam edit, ab alis vibratis provenit.

THE
RED-THROATED HUMMING-
BIRD.

GENERIC CHARACTER.

Bill slender, tubular, the upper mandible sheathing the lower.

Tongue very long, missile ; formed of two conjoined cylindric tubes.

Toes three forward, one backward.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER, &c.

STRAIT-BILLED gold-green HUMMING-
-BIRD, whitish beneath, with gold-red
throat.

LE RUBIS.

Buff. Ois. 6. p. 13.

L' OISEAU - MOUCHE a gorge rouge de la
Caroline.

Briff. Orn. 3. p. 716. No. 13.

The lively colors with which Nature has so liberally adorned the birds of the warmer regions, sink into obscurity when compared with the polished radiance and gemmeous lustre which distinguish most of the species of this diminutive genus. The ruby is not more
vivid



vivid than the red which some species exhibit, nor gold so brilliant as the glance of their varying plumage: it is therefore entirely beyond the power of art to represent their colours with fidelity: all that can be done is to give a general idea of the inimitable beauties which Nature exhibits to us in these birds.

Before the discovery of the Western Hemisphere, the golden-crested wren was believed to be the smallest of birds; but the Naturalists of Europe were astonished on finding that the new world afforded birds inferior in size to many of the European insects; and that one species in particular was scarce larger than a common beetle. As that very minute species however is not so remarkable for the beauty of its color as most others of the genus, I have rather chosen to exhibit one which displays a more elegant assemblage of colors, and at the same time may be numbered amongst the smallest of the genus.

This beautiful bird is a native of many parts of America, and is very frequently seen in the provinces of North and South Carolina. The bill in this species is black; the upper parts of the bird are of a rich variable golden-green; the chin and throat of the most glowing scarlet, changing according to the light into polished gold; the breast and belly are white, and the long feathers of the wings are of a purplish brown. The female differs in having the whole under surface white, without any of the ruby-red, which so richly adorns the male. This diminutive bird flies with a rapidity altogether astonishing. It feeds in the manner of a moth on the wing, by inserting its long tubular tongue

tongue into the bottoms of flowers, from which it sucks the honey-juice. They are said to be of a very pugnacious nature, and have frequently the most violent contests when they happen to dispute the possession of the same flower. They often fly into houses, and after taking a few circuits round the room in the manner of European insects, again dart into the open air. They build amongst the thick foliage of trees, on some forked twig. The nest is about an inch in diameter in the inside, and half an inch deep: it is lined with the down of plants, and coated on the outside with moss and lichens. They lay only two eggs, which are perfectly white, and about the size of peas. During the time of incubation, and when the eggs are hatched, they shew an astonishing degree of courage, and in defence of their young have frequently been known to attack and put to flight even the larger birds which have happened to approach near the same tree. They have no other note than a kind of sharp squeak, which they emit now and then; the noise which they make during flight is caused by their wings, and is not unlike that of a fly, or bee.



Shaw, George. 1791. "Red-throated Hummingbird, *Trochilus colubris* [Pl. 66]."
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