

MYZOMELA CRUENTATA, *Meyer.*

Red-tinted Honey-eater.

Myzomela cruentata, Meyer, Sitzungsber. d. k.-k. Acad. d. W. zu Wien, 16. Juli 1874, vol. lxx. p. 202.

DR. MEYER has been good enough to send me the type of his *Myzomela cruentata*, a charming little bird which he procured in New Guinea. That this country should have contained an undescribed species of this well-defined genus is not surprising, considering that at least ten others frequent the adjacent Papuan Islands, Australia, New Caledonia, Samoa, &c. &c. *M. cruentata* is closely allied to the Meliphagidae, or, more appropriately speaking, a part of these honey-feeding birds, a little genus which frequents the flowering trees of the forest, particularly the acacias and *Eucalypti*. Sprightly in all their actions, they display their fine colours to the greatest advantage, their prevailing tints often contrasting with the blossoms of the trees upon which they subsist. Their principal food is honey and insects, which their little brush tongues facilitate their gathering. That *Myzomela cruentata* is a very rare species is evidenced by only one specimen being found; and, for my own part, I have never seen a second.

As Dr. Meyer has favoured me with a short note respecting this new species, I have the pleasure of inserting it here. He says:—" *Myzomela cruentata* is distinguished from *M. sanguinolenta*, Gould, 'Birds of Australia,' vol. iv. pl. 63, by the red colour predominating everywhere; besides, the latter has the lores black, and the tail and wings do not possess any red tint, whilst in *cruentata* the parts when closed appear quite red, although somewhat less intense on the back and under surface; furthermore the whole of the underparts are intense red, while in *sanguinolenta* they are brownish yellow. The figure of *Certhia cardinalis*, Aud. and Vieill. Ois. Dor. ii. t. 58, shows the under surface to be quite red, and agrees in this respect with *M. cruentata*; but the wings, tail, and region of the eyes are decidedly deep black.

Male.—"Red, especially on the head, back, and uropygium. Primaries and secondaries dusky black, with red margins; the tertiaries, as well as the upper wing-coverts, deeply tinged with red; underside of wings grey; base of the inner webs whitish; middle tail-feathers rufous; under surface of the tail grey with a reddish tinge; outer webs of the rectrices broadly margined with the same colour. Bill, feet, and claws black. Total length 105 millims., wings 58, tail 42, bill from the front 14."

Hab. Arfak Mountains, New Guinea.

The figures in the accompanying Plate are of the natural size.