

## TROGON AMBIGUUS.

### Doubtful Trogon.

#### SPECIFIC CHARACTER.

*Trog. facie, capite, guttureque nigris; pectore, cervice, dorso, tectricibusque caudæ superioribus viridibus; alis brunnescenti-nigris, in medio cinereis lineis gracilibus flexuosis nigris transversim notatis; remigibus externè albo fimbriatis; rectricibus duabus intermediis proximarumque duarum pogoniis externis cupreo-viridibus, harum pogoniis internis omniumque apicibus nigris, reliquis ad basin nigris, ad apicem albis, in medio albis maculis parvis numerosis sparsis nigris.*

*Rostrum flavum: tarsi brunnei.*

Bill bright yellow; face, top of the head, and throat black; chest, back of the neck, back, and upper tail-coverts green; wings brownish black, the primaries having their outer edges fringed with white; secondaries and centres grey, finely marked with zigzag transverse lines of black; two middle tail-feathers green with bronzy reflections; the two next green with bronzy reflections on their outer edges only; the inner webs black; the three outer ones on each side black at their base and white at the tip, the middle portion being minutely dotted with black on a white ground; feet brown.

Total length about 12 inches; wing,  $5\frac{1}{4}$  to  $5\frac{1}{2}$ ; tail,  $7\frac{1}{4}$ .

*Trogon ambiguus.* Gould, Proceedings of Zool. Soc., Part III.

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THOSE who have had opportunities for studying nature are well aware how slight occasionally are the shades of difference between closely-allied species: it might be objected that these differences may be merely casual, or those of variety only; but when we find that they constantly obtain in two birds brought from two very distinct countries, and that by attending to their markings we should be able to assign to each its peculiar locality, the objection falls to the ground: it is true that the same species may differ in the intensity of its colouring, from the influence of temperature, air, and food, but it will seldom be found to vary in the character of its permanent markings.

It is upon these views that I have ventured to separate this bird from the *Trogon elegans*, to which it so closely assimilates that it requires an experienced eye to note the points of difference; these points consist in the obscure and pale, but finely-dotted appearance of the outer tail-feathers of *Trog. ambiguus*, in opposition to the strong and well-defined black bars on the same part in *Trog. elegans*; while at the same time the centre of the wing is much more finely and minutely barred in the former than in the latter. Had I seen only a single individual of each of these birds, I might have been in doubt on the subject; but my comparisons having been made upon individuals of all ages, I feel but little hesitation in assigning to the present bird, at least provisionally, the rank of a distinct species.

The localities in which these two birds appear to be indigenous are distinctly separated from each other; all the examples I have seen of *Trogon ambiguus* having been exclusively received from the northern states of Mexico, while the *Trogon elegans* is strictly limited to the southern.

The Plate represents an adult male.