

AULACORAMPHUS PRASINUS.

Golden-green Groove-bill.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER.

Aul. mandibulâ superiore flavâ, culminis strigâ, maculâ ante nares, lineâque ad tomium nigris; inferiore nigrâ; corpore superiore aureo-viridi.

Upper surface golden green, passing into blue on the extremities of the secondaries and the apical portion of the tail-feathers, of which the lateral ones are largely and the central ones slightly tipped with chestnut; primaries brownish black, margined at the base of the outer webs with green; throat and cheeks yellowish white; under surface light green, washed with blue on the breast and fading into white on the vent; under tail-coverts chestnut; upper mandible yellow, with a patch of black at the base of the culmen, passing anteriorly into chestnut-red; an oblong spot of black before the nostrils, and a streak of the same hue along the serratures, above which is a wash of green; under mandible black, with a narrow line of yellowish white at the base.

Total length, 14 inches; bill, $3\frac{1}{2}$; wing, $5\frac{1}{2}$; tail, 6; tarsi, $1\frac{1}{2}$.

Pteroglossus prasinus, Licht. in Mus. Berl.—Gould, Mon. of Ramph., pl. 29.—Ib. Sturm's Edit., pl. —Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. ii. p. 404, *Pteroglossus*, sp. 13.

Aulacoramphus prasinus, Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 96, *Aulacoramphus*, sp. 4.

ALTHOUGH by far the greater number of the *Aulacoramphi* are inhabitants of the great continent of South America proper, yet we have positive proofs that two species at least are found to the northward of the isthmus; namely the beautiful *A. cæruleogularis*, which is a native of Veragua and doubtless of Costa Rica, and the *A. prasinus*, which inhabits Guatemala and the southern provinces of Mexico generally: to these districts they would seem to be confined, and I believe that they never pass to the southward of Panama: a circumstance which tends to support such an opinion, is, that the countries to the north and south of this neutral ground have each a peculiar fauna of their own; more in regard to species, however, than to diversity of form. When I figured this species, twenty years ago, it was very rare; it is now to be met with in many collections; in my own there are four or five examples, some of which were procured by that indefatigable traveller M. Delattre, while the others were presented to me by my valued friend and correspondent M. Floresi.

Of the habits and economy of the Golden-green Groove-bill, as distinguished in the minuter details from those of the other species of the genus, I have no information to communicate: the sexes present the usual similarity of appearance; on the other hand, in the young bird, as will be seen in the accompanying Plate, a marked difference occurs, not only in the size, but in the colouring of its bill, during its progress from youth to maturity,—a feature not peculiar to this species alone, but characteristic of the whole family: the development of the beak, also, is much more gradual than that of the rest of the body; for when the latter has acquired its complete dimensions, the former is little more than half the size it is afterwards to attain.

The Plate represents a male, a female, and the heads of two young birds, of the natural size.

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