

SPARGANURA GLYCERIA.

Purple-tailed Comet.

Cometes mossai, Gould, Athen. 1853.

Cometes? glyceria, Gould, Mon. Troch. vol. iii. p. 104, 1861.

Lesbia glyceria, Bon. Rev. et Mag. de Zool. 1854, p. 252.

Zodalia glyceria, Muls. vol. iii. p. 250.—Elliot, Synopsis of the Trochilidæ, p. 150.

Sparganura mossai, Cab. & Heine, Mus. Hein. 1860, Th. iii. p. 52, note.

Sparganura glyceria, Sclat. & Salv. Nomencl. p. 80, 1873.

BEING in possession of a female specimen of *Sparganura glyceria*, I think it advisable, both in the interests of the Trochilidist and of those who study the subject less scientifically, to figure it in this Supplement, and at the same time to associate with the drawing one of the male, back and front, which has already been depicted in the third volume of the 'Humming-birds.' Had it been possible, this female would have been figured thirty years ago.

Both Mr. Elliot, of North America, and M. Mulsant, of France, a short time ago completed Monographs of the Humming-birds. When giving the description of this bird, they both say, in their letterpress, that there was no female known. This they would not have said had they ever seen my beautiful specimen, which I now figure, and which has been lying beside the male for the last five or six years.

In comparing *Sparganura* (Humming-birds with broad tail-feathers and pointed throat-marks) with *Zodalia*, the differences between the two genera are apparent. The throat-mark in the latter is rounded, and the tail-feathers narrow; the rich purple colour of the back distinguishes the latter bird from all the species of this great family. A glance at the plates of *S. glyceria* and *Z. ortonii* will, I think, convince any one that the two species belong to distinct genera.

Before leaving the subject, I may state that I think it would be well for collectors to go to Popayan, or within a hundred miles of it, if they would supply those at home with the bird they so much admire.

The colouring of the male:—Head, back of the neck, wing-coverts, back, and tail-coverts deep shining green; wings purplish brown; chin and throat metallic light olive-green; sides of the neck and under surface buff, with a spot of deep shining green at the tip of each feather; tail dark reddish purple, passing into deep bluish green at the tip, except on the outer feathers, where the hue is so faint as to be scarcely perceptible; the outer feathers also have the basal three fourths of the shafts and the outer webs buffy white, the base of the shaft paler than the web; basal three fourths of the shaft of the next feathers also buffy white; under tail-coverts buff, with a brown mark in the centre near the tip.

Female. All the crown, back of the neck, and back green; throat, centre of the belly, and under tail-coverts buff; these minutely spotted with green; on the throat more numerous, and larger spottings on the sides, and no such green spots on the buff which covers the under tail-coverts (at least the green is scarcely perceptible); wings above purplish brown; tail coloured with the brightest purple on the upper part, some of the feathers, particularly the short middle ones, tipped with green; the undersides of the plumage precisely like those of the male; bill brown.

Male. Total length 6 inches, tail $3\frac{1}{2}$, wing $2\frac{1}{2}$, bill $\frac{1}{2}$, tarsi $\frac{3}{4}$; toes and nails longer than the tarsus.

Female. Total length $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, tail $2\frac{1}{2}$, wing $2\frac{3}{8}$, bill $\frac{1}{2}$.

The Plate represents the male in two positions, and a female, of the natural size.

Habitat. Popayan.