

CHÆTOCERCUS BOMBUS, *Gould.*

Little Wood-Star.

Chætocercus bombus, Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1870, p. 804.—Elliot, Synopsis, 1879, p. 121.
Polyxenus bombus, Muls. Hist. Nat. Oiseaux-Mouches, tom. iv. p. 123 (1879).

THE beautiful little Wood-Star of which I am now attempting a description is the smallest Humming-bird known. I have seen enough of it to see that it is a charming little gem that will please every one. A few years ago I received four specimens—three dried males, and one female. I soon made my drawing and commenced the description, both generic and specific. The former was easy; but a specific appellation was not so readily determined upon. At last I hit upon the specific name of *bombus*.

This little Wood-Star has a beautiful puce-coloured throat. The wings are very diminutive, and must be moved with the greatest rapidity to carry even this little bird through the air. The outer tail-feathers are a sort of hair-like spines, such as are seldom seen in a bird. I may state that this Humming-bird looking like a great humble-bee suggested to me the specific name of *bombus*.

The following description was given by me at the meeting of the Zoological Society, December 6th, 1870:—

“This species must be classed with the most diminutive of the Trochilidæ. In its general appearance and in its coloration it strongly reminds one of *Chætocercus rosæ*, while in some parts of its structure, particularly in the form of its two hair-like outer tail-feathers, it resembles *Acestura mulsanti*; its wing is even smaller and shorter than that of the little *A. heliodori*. It must, however, be placed, as I believe it is correctly, in the genus *Chætocercus*.

“The following is a more minute description and admeasurement of this little bird.

“*Male*.—Crown of the head, upper surface, and abdomen bronzy green; throat brilliant crimson-red, nearly surrounded by a mark of buff, forming a conspicuous band across the chest (a feature distinguishing it from *Chætocercus rosæ*, in which the band occupying the same space is white); wings purplish black; the tail-feathers the same, with the exception of the third or longest on each side, on which there is a very narrow edging of buff near the base of the inner margin; the two outer tail-feathers very fine and hair-like, the four central ones extremely small, so much so as to be hidden beneath the tail-coverts; bill and legs black.

“Total length $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, bill $\frac{5}{16}$, wing $1\frac{5}{16}$, longest tail-feathers $\frac{3}{4}$, tarsi $\frac{1}{8}$.

“*Female*.—Larger than the male. Crown and upper surface green; throat and under surface chestnut-brown; tail, which is extremely short and even, deep chestnut-brown, banded with black across the centre of each feather.

“Total length $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, bill $\frac{5}{8}$, wing $1\frac{1}{2}$, tail $\frac{1}{2}$, tarsi $\frac{1}{8}$.

“*Hab.* Citado in Ecuador.”