

## PTEROGLOSSUS INSCRIPTUS, *Swains.*

Lettered Araçari.

### SPECIFIC CHARACTER.

Mas.—*Pter. rostro stramineo, nigro serrato; culmine, apice, fasciâque basali nigris; capite colloque atris; crisso coccineo.*

Fœm.—*Gula brunnea.*

Male.—Head, neck and throat glossy black; back, wings and tail dark olive-green; rump blood-red; under surface lemon-yellow; thighs externally olive-green, internally pale brown; bill straw-yellow, with a basal band of black and a black culmen and tip, the serrations also marked by irregular bands of black; raised ridge at the base of the bill straw-yellow; irides dark carmine; orbits very gaily coloured, the different colours separated by a fold in the skin; the portion above and before the eye light cobalt-blue; below the eye violet-grey, behind which is a triangular mark of yellowish carmine; tarsi dark green.

Total length, 13 inches; bill, 3; wing,  $4\frac{3}{8}$ ; tail,  $5\frac{1}{2}$ ; tarsi,  $1\frac{1}{8}$ .

Female.—Similar to the male, except that the throat is dark chocolate-brown instead of black.

*Pteroglossus inscriptus*, Swains. Zool. Ill., vol. ii. pl. 90.—Wagl. Syst. Av., *Pteroglossus*, sp. 5.

—Gould's Mon. of Ramph., pl. 23.—Ib. Sturm's Edit., pl. —Bonap. Conspl.

Gen. Av., p. 94, *Pteroglossus*, sp. 13.—Less. Traité d'Orn., p. 175, *Pteroglossus*, sp. 5.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. ii. p. 404, *Pteroglossus*, sp. 12.

—*scriptus*, Temm. Man. d'Orn., tom. 1. p. lxxvi.

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THE great forests clothing the low alluvial land of South America to the north of the Equator, through which flows the majestic Amazon, constitute the natural habitat of this elegant little species. Hitherto it has been supposed that it was confined to the remote parts of Guiana and Cayenne; but that it enjoys a very extensive range is proved by the circumstance of Mr. John Natterer having found it in the woods on the River Guapore, in the vicinity of Cidade de Mattagrosso (formerly called Villabella), in the 15th degree of south latitude, near Borba, where the Madeira flows into the Amazon, and near Para, which lies between the first and second degrees of south latitude. It is from this latter locality that the specimens from which my figures were taken were sent by Mr. Wallace.

A glance at the accompanying Plate will at once indicate to the reader why this bird has been named *inscriptus*, as it will be seen that the markings of the bill offer a considerable resemblance to Hebrew characters, which circumstance has obtained for it the trivial name of the Lettered Araçari. We find it stated in Sturm's Edition of this Monograph, on the authority of Mr. Natterer, that it lives in families, and feeds principally on berries. The beautiful plant figured in the accompanying Plate, *Bilbergia iridifolia*, was copied from a drawing made by Miss Hamilton Smith, whose talents as an artist are only equalled by her many other acquirements and amiable disposition.

The colouring of the orbits of this bird is very varied and beautiful, and is carefully represented on the accompanying Plate, from a drawing given to me by Mr. John Natterer, a sufficient guarantee for its accuracy. The female may be distinguished from the male by the brown, instead of black colouring of her throat; in other respects the sexes are very similar. As is the case with other species, the bills of individuals differ somewhat in appearance; the letter-like markings varying in form, and the black mark at the base of the lower mandible being more extensive in some than in others: the Messrs. Sturm have figured an immature bird, from which we learn that in the youthful state the letter-like markings are very faintly indicated, and the black mark at the base of the lower mandible is much smaller than in the adult.

The Plate represents the two sexes of the natural size.