SAUCEROTTIA CYANIFRONS.

Blue-capped Saucerottia.

Trochilus cyanifrons, Bourc. Rev. Zool. 1843, p. 100.—Ib. Ann. de la Soc. Sci. de Lyons, 1843, p. 42.

Polytmus cyanifrons, Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 108, *Polytmus*, sp. 66.

Thalurania cyanifrons, Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 77, *Thalurania*, sp. 8.

Saucerottia cyanifrons, Bonap. Rev. et Mag. de Zool. 1854, p. 255.—Reichenb. Aufz. der Colibris, p. 8.

Chlorestes cyanifrons, Reichenb. Troch. enumer., p. 4. pl. DCCI. figs. 4571, 4572.

On perusing the pages of the present work, it will be seen that ornithologists have occasionally selected the names of individuals celebrated for their scientific attainments to designate some of the many genera into which they have found it necessary to subdivide this great family of birds. Among these, that of *Saucerottia* will always stand as the memorial of a gentleman of varied acquirements, and possessing an intimate acquaintance with the Trochilidæ; the selection of his name as a designation for one of these groups is therefore a just and more than usually appropriate tribute.

Although I admit that the present bird is allied to the type of the genus, it nevertheless differs considerably in its colouring, particularly in the rich blue cap which surmounts the head—a character which has not yet been found to exist in any other species of the form. A superficial observer might be inclined to place this bird in some other group—perhaps that of *Cyanomyia*,—but that would not be its proper situation; its peculiarly formed tail, its broad and rigid under tail-feathers, its white and rather thickly clothed thighs, are characters which naturally indicate its true position.

Every collector, both in this country and on the Continent, is so abundantly supplied with examples of this bird, that it would not become rare even were no more killed for the next hundred years. From Bogota it is sent in great numbers; and it is also found in nearly every part of Columbia, wherever regions occur of similar altitude and temperature: M. Bourcier's typical specimen was obtained at Ybague, in New Grenada. I have not yet seen it from any place to the northward of the Isthmus of Panama.

In ten specimens now lying before me, the colouring of the body is so very similar, that they can scarcely be distinguished the one from the other; but much difference is observable in the intensity of the blue on the crown, varying as it does from a beautiful deep indigo to a greenish blue, and a green but slightly tinged with blue: this latter state may probably be characteristic of the female; if it be not, I am unable to define that sex, but I am pretty certain that it is.

Crown of the head deep blue, varying in different specimens, as above described, to greenish blue and bluish green; upper surface and wing-coverts bronzy green, the bronzy hue predominating on the rump and upper tail-coverts; wings purplish blue; tail very dark purple or bluish black; the whole of the under surface shining grass-green; under tail-coverts purplish olive, fringed with greyish white; upper mandible and tip of the lower black; the remainder of the under mandible either yellowish or flesh-colour.

The Plate represents what I believe to be the two sexes, of the natural size. The plant is the *Befaria æstuans*.