

RAMPHASTOS OSCULANS, *Gould.*

Osculant Toucan.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER.

Ramph. rostro aterrimo, culmine fasciâque nigrâ basali flavis; pectore in medio aurantiaco, latera versus in flavescentem transeunte, gulâ regioneque paroticâ albis; lineâ pectus posticè cingente crissoque coccineis; uropygio sulphureo in aurantiacum transeunte.

General plumage jet-black; breast orange-yellow in the centre, fading off into light yellow, which again is lost in the pure white of the throat, ear-coverts, and sides of the neck; band across the breast and under tail-coverts deep blood-red; upper tail-coverts sulphur-yellow at the base, and fine orange on their apical half; bill black, with the culmen, the tip of the lower mandible, and a broad basal band fine greenish yellow, the latter washed with greenish blue towards the cutting edge of the upper and on the lower mandible; at the base of the bill a narrow line of black; orbits light greenish blue, becoming of a deeper or cobalt-blue towards the eye; eyelids dark bluish grey; outer edge of the irides bluish green, their inner edge dark greenish brown; tarsi and feet very rich light blue in front, and of a lilac hue behind.

Total length, 19 inches; bill, $5\frac{1}{4}$; wing, $7\frac{3}{4}$; tail, $6\frac{1}{2}$; tarsi, $1\frac{2}{3}$.

Ramphastos osculans, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part III. p. 156.—Ib. Mon. of Ramph., pl. 5.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. ii. p. 403, *Ramphastos*, sp. 14.—Bonap. Conspl. Gen. Av., p. 92, *Ramphastos*, sp. 6.

At the time I published the First Edition of this work, the single specimen contained in the Imperial Museum at Vienna, from which I took my figure, was, I believe, the only one that had been sent to Europe, and it is even now a rare bird in our collections. This may be due to the circumstance of its habitat being a distant and remote part of South America, rarely visited by Europeans. Mr. John Natterer, to whom I am indebted for a knowledge of its soft parts, killed it on the river Madeira; Mr. Wallace has sent it from the Rio Negro; and there is a specimen in the Museum of the Zoological Society of London, which was brought to this country from the interior of Guiana by Sir Robert Schomburgk.

It may be regarded as, without exception, one of the loveliest of the *Ramphasti*, vieing as it does in the variety of its colours with all the other members of the group. The white feathers at the side of the neck are dense, and of a pure white; the orange-yellow wash on the centre of the breast is of the most lovely tint imaginable; the tail-coverts too are of a beautiful sulphur-yellow at the base, passing into an equally beautiful orange on their apical half; and the general plumage is of the blackest jet. In the colouring of its breast it resembles *R. vitellinus*, but it differs from that species in the broad culmenal mark of yellow and in its orange-coloured upper tail-coverts. In the general colouring of the bill it resembles *R. culminatus*, but it differs from that bird in having the breast orange: again, it is nearly allied to *R. Cuvieri* and *R. citreolæmus*, but is readily distinguished from both those species by its smaller size, and by the rich colouring of its breast.

I find some slight variety in different specimens as to the amount of the scarlet on the breast: in some it assumes the form of a band, while in others it forms a large gorget-like mark, as in *R. vitellinus*: the orbits are perhaps denuded to a larger extent than in any other species; and in most of the specimens I have seen the culmen is very broad and much flattened, and moreover bulges out laterally so as to form a decided ridge on each side; but I have one example in which the bulging is not so decided, and the culmen is narrower and regularly arched. I do not, however, consider this difference to be indicative of more than a local variety.

The figures are of the natural size.