

CÆLIGENA TYPICA.

Cæligene.

Ornismya Cæligena, Less. Les Troch., p. 141. pl. 53.—Jard. Nat. Lib. Humming Birds, vol. ii. p. 53. pl. 4.

Mellisuga cæligena, Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 112, *Mellisuga*, sp. 15.

Caeligena typica, Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 73, *Caeligena*, sp. 1.

Cæligena typica, Bonap. Consp. Troch. in Rev. et Mag. de Zool. 1854, p. 252.

WERE not the numerous specimens of this bird, which we have of late years received, all perfectly alike, we might naturally suppose that they were birds clothed in an immature dress, or females of some species the males of which were not known; all the bright colour which occurs being on the lower part of the back, and consisting of a metallic lustre on the edges of the rump-feathers, which is only visible in certain lights; late discoveries, however, have made us acquainted with other species of this form, in which a similar style of plumage prevails, and we now find that there is a large group of these plainly-coloured birds, to which, therefore, a distinctive generic title has with propriety been given; all inhabit the great Andean ranges, and one or other of the species is found from the Isthmus of Panama to Bolivia. It is not, however, on the bleak Sierras that these birds must be sought for, but on the first Steppes of the Andes, above the great plains which stretch away to the eastward. I have always considered the Bolivian bird to be different from the one here figured, and if this opinion be correct, the range of the latter will be more limited than it at present appears to be. I have seen specimens from Ecuador, Popayan, Quito, Quijos, Bogota, and the Caraccas, beyond which, in all probability, its range does not extend. Mr. Mark informs me that the Bogota specimens are collected in the hot districts of Gramalote, which lie to the eastward of that city, at an elevation of from one to two thousand feet.

I believe that there is little or no difference in the colouring of the sexes, and that the female can only be distinguished by her smaller size.

The head, neck, back and wing-coverts are bronzy crimson-brown, becoming brighter bronze on the lower part of the back and rump, the feathers of which parts are fringed with metallic grass-green, the brilliancy of which is most conspicuous when viewed from behind; wings purplish brown; upper tail-coverts rich reddish bronze; tail bronzy green; feathers of the throat grey with brown centres, giving that part a scaly appearance; flanks and abdomen purplish brown; under tail-coverts brownish green edged with buff.

The figures are the size of life.