

HELIOTHRIX AURICULATUS.

Brazilian Fairy.

Trochilus auriculatus, Licht. Erman Verz. von Thier., p. 5. t. 2. figs. 1, 2.

Ornismya Pouchettii, Less. Rev. Zool. 1840, p. 72.

Heliothrix auriculatus, Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 115, *Heliothrix*, sp. 3.

Heliothrix poucheti, Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 69, *Heliothrix*, sp. 3.

DR. LICHTENSTEIN'S name of *auriculatus* having been given to this species prior to that of *Poucheti* bestowed upon it by M. Lesson, is necessarily the one adopted, although the species is more generally known by the latter; had this not been the case, I should have felt great pleasure in retaining the term selected by M. Lesson to do honour to the amiable and accomplished Dr. Pouchet of Rouen.

It will be seen that in my account of the *H. auritus* I have stated that it is a native of Guiana and Cayenne; this species, on the other hand, inhabits Southern Brazil, and I do not believe that either species encroaches upon the other's territories, but that each is confined to their respective countries.

The *H. auriculatus* is a larger and more robust species than *H. auritus* or *H. Barroti*, from both of which it may be readily distinguished by the metallic green whisker occupying the throat as well as the sides of the neck; another remarkable feature is observable in some specimens, namely, that the tail is both shorter and more rounded than in others; the bird in fact appearing to be subject to the same diversity in this and other respects that I have mentioned in my account of *H. auritus*.

Mr. Reeves informs me that it inhabits Rio de Janeiro and Minas Geraes, but is nowhere very common; that it is not met with in the immediate vicinity of Rio, but that it arrives in Novo Friburgo in July, and remains until September: during its stay it evinces a decided preference for the flowers of the orange trees, which doubtless afford it an abundant supply of some peculiar and congenial kind of insect food: Mr. Reeves adds, that, as we might infer from its general contour, its flight is both powerful and rapid.

A nest sent to me by Mr. Reeves as belonging to this species, is labelled "*Colibri ventre blanc*; local name *Oreus azul*; cry *zook-zook-zook*."

The nest is of a somewhat lengthened form, attached to the side of a small twig, composed of fine dark brown vegetable fibres, coated externally with small flakes of pale olive and buff-coloured bark. Another example is of a still longer form, attached on one side to a slender vertical twig, and composed of some cottony material held together externally by apparently cobwebs and patches of grey lichen.

The male has the head, all the upper surface, lengthened upper tail-coverts, upper and under wing-coverts rich golden green, very brilliant on the head; wings purplish black; four central tail-feathers bluish black, lateral tail-feathers snowy white; patch below and behind the eye black, terminating in a small tuft of violet-blue feathers; down each side of the neck a broad stripe of rich luminous green, the two stripes uniting on and occupying the chin; centre of the throat and all the under surface pure white; bill black; feet flesh-colour.

The female is similar in her general colouring, but is destitute of the brilliancy on the head, of the blue ear-tufts and the green neck stripes, the absence of which causes the black below the eye and on the ear-coverts to show very conspicuously: the lateral tail-feathers crossed near their base by a purplish band.

The young resemble the female, but have a spot of pale bronzy brown at the tip of each feather of the throat and breast.

The figures are of the natural size; the flower of the bulbous plant figured with them was sent to me by Mr. Reeves of Rio de Janeiro, and is introduced as offering a pleasing contrast to the birds rather than as one to which they are particularly attached.