

METALLURA SMARAGDINICOLLIS.

Violet-Tail.

Orthorhynchus smaragdinicollis, D'Orb. et Lafr. Syn., p. 31. No. 23.—D'Orb. Voy. dans l'Amér. Mérid., tom. iv. p. 375. atlas, Ois., pl. 59. fig. 2.

Mellisuga smaragdinicollis, Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 112, *Mellisuga*, sp. 42.

Metallura smaragdinicollis, Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 75, *Metallura*, sp. 3.—Reich. Auf. der Col., p. 8.—Bonap. Rev. Zool. 1854, p. 253.

At a first glance this species has a close resemblance to the *M. tyrianthina*; but on a further examination it is found to be more beautiful, and it certainly is very much more rare in the collections of Europe; the two species are in fact representatives of each other on either side of the equator, the present bird being found solely in Peru and Bolivia, while the *M. tyrianthina* is as exclusively an inhabitant of the high ranges north of the line. The beautiful violaceous tail of the present species will at all times distinguish it from its northern representative, this feature occurs in both sexes; in other respects their colouring is very similar. The discovery of this fine bird is due to the researches of M. D'Orbigny, who has published the following short note respecting its habitat, habits, &c. :—

“This species inhabits the woody and rather warm mountains of the eastern dip of the Cordilleras, from the 17th to the 18th degree of south latitude, principally in the environs of the hamlet of Cajapi, near Yanacaché, in the province of the Yungas, and in Palea, in the province d'Ayupaya in Bolivia. At no part is it common. Like most of the species inhabiting these regions, it lives more on the larvæ and the nymphalides of the small species of Hemiptera, than on the pollen of flowers.”

The *Metallura smaragdinicollis* is one of the species procured by Mr. Bridges during his sojourn in Bolivia; it was also obtained by M. Warszewicz in Peru; from both these gentlemen I received examples.

The male has the head, all the upper surface and wing-coverts dark green; behind the eye a small spot of greyish white; down the centre of the throat an oblong mark of luminous green; wings purplish brown; tail reddish violet with green reflexions above, and reddish violet beneath; under surface of the body bronzy green; bill black.

The female is golden or bronzy green above, and buff, glossed with green, beneath; wings purplish brown; tail violet-purple, the lateral feathers tipped, and the centre ones slightly fringed at the end with greyish white; a small spot of greyish white behind the eye, and no trace of the gorget.

The figures are of the natural size. The plant is the *Dictyanthus Paroni*.