

## OXYPOGON LINDENI.

### Linden's Helmet-crest.

*Ornysmia Lindenii*, Parz. in Rev. Zool. 1845, p. 253.

*Oxygogon Lindenii*, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part XV. p. 14.

*Mellisuga Lindenii*, Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, *Mellisuga*, sp. 31.

*Black Warrior*, of the dealers in specimens of natural history.

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FOR our knowledge of this fine species we are indebted to the researches of Monsieur J. Linden of Luxembourg, whose name it bears, and who discovered it in the province of Merida in the Republic of Venezuela. It is very nearly allied to the *Oxygogon Guerini*, but is readily distinguished from that species by its much larger size and darker hue, by having a mere indication of the stripe of green down the throat, and by the shafts only of the lateral tail-feathers being white. Having solicited M. Linden to furnish me with some information respecting this interesting species, he has obligingly transmitted to me the following remarks:—

“I met with this species for the first time in August 1842, while ascending the Sierra Nevada de Merida, the crests of which are the most elevated of the eastern branch of the Cordilleras of Columbia. It inhabits the regions immediately beneath the line of perpetual congelation, at an elevation of from 12,000 to 13,000 feet above the level of the sea; Messrs. Funck and Schlim found it equally abundant in the Paramos near the Sierra Nevada, at the comparatively low elevation of 9000 feet. It appears to be confined to the region between the 8th and 9th degrees of north latitude. It occasionally perches upon the thinly scattered shrubs of this icy region, such as the *Hypericum*, *Myrtus*, *Daphne*, arborescent *Espeletias*, and towards the lower limit on *Bejarias*, but most frequently upon the projecting ledges of the rocks near to the snow. Its flight is swift, but very short; when it leaves the spot upon which it has been perched, it launches itself obliquely downwards, uttering at the same time a plaintive whistling sound, which is also occasionally uttered while perched; as well as I can recollect, I have never heard it produce the humming sound made by several other members of the group, nor does it partake of their joyous spirit and perpetual activity. Neither myself nor Messrs. Funck and Schlim were able to discover its nest, although we all made a most diligent search. Its food appears principally to consist of minute insects, all the specimens we procured having their stomachs filled with small flies.”

The adult male has the head and lengthened crest black, with a narrow stripe of white feathers down the centre, joined on the forehead by two narrow lines of white, which proceed along either side of the base of the bill; down the centre of the throat is a similar lengthened tuft of white feathers, in the middle of which there is a faint indication of the rich shining green mark so conspicuous in *O. Guerini*; black of the head bounded on the sides and in front by a broad band of white; upper surface, wing-coverts and two centre tail-feathers bronzy green, the latter with a narrow line of white down the basal portion of the shaft; lateral tail-feathers coppery bronze, with the basal portion of the shafts white, which is somewhat broader on the outer feather on each side than on the others; under surface of the tail bronzy purple; wings purplish brown; under surface olive-brown, with bronzy reflexions; under tail-coverts bronzy green, narrowly edged with white; bill, feet and eyes brownish black.

Total length,  $5\frac{1}{4}$  inches; bill,  $\frac{5}{8}$ ; wing, 3; tail,  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ; tarsus,  $\frac{5}{8}$ .

The female has the head and upper surface coppery brown; tail as in the male, but not so rich in colour, and with a broader mark of white on the lateral feathers; throat mottled with white and coppery brown feathers; flanks coppery brown with greenish reflexions.

Total length,  $4\frac{3}{4}$  inches; bill,  $\frac{1}{2}$ ; wing,  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ; tail, 2; tarsus,  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

The figures represent two males and a female of the natural size, on a flowering branch of *Bejaria coarctata*, Hooker.