

AGLÆACTIS CASTELNAUI.

Castelnau's Sunbeam.

Trochilus Castelnaudii, Bourc. et Muls. Rev. Zool. 1848, p. 270.

——— *Castelnaui*, Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. iii., Supp. App. p. 30a, App. to p. 103.

Aglæactis castelnaudii, Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 73, *Aglæactis*, sp. 4.—Reich. Aufz. der Col., p. 9.

Aglæactis castelneui, Bonap. Rev. et Mag. de Zool. 1854, p. 253.

Two specimens of this extremely fine species of *Aglæactis* are all that are known; these were collected in the neighbourhood of Cusco by the celebrated and intrepid traveller, Count Castelnau, during his travels in Peru. One of these specimens graces the gallery of the Jardin des Plantes at Paris, the other my own collection; the latter is probably a female, and the former a young male: whenever the fully adult bird is discovered, it will doubtless prove to be an object of the greatest beauty.

Its large size, the resplendent purple colouring of the back, and the great number of broad, elongated and pendent plumes of the breast, certainly render it the most ornamental species of the genus. It is allied to *Aglæactis cupripennis* and *A. Pamela*, which, combined with the *A. caumatonotus*, form one of the best-defined genera of the family.

This species has been named by MM. Bourcier and Mulsant in honour of its discoverer.

The male has the general plumage of a dark bronzy-brown, mottled with patches of a lighter hue about the sides of the head, neck and throat; lower part of the back and upper tail-coverts beautiful lilaceous-purple; wings bronzy-brown; on the centre of the chest a number of pendent white plumes; tail rufous, glossed with bronze on the central feathers and the margins and tips of the remainder; under surface bronzy-brown, fading into buffy-red on the under tail-coverts; upper mandible black; under mandible flesh-colour; feet brown.

The supposed female is very similar, but has only a trace of the fine lilaceous-purple on the rump and upper tail-coverts.

The figures are the size of life. The plant is the *Tacsonia mollissima*.