

LESBIA NUNA.

Nouna-Koali.

Ornismya Nuna, Less. Supp. des Ois.-Mou., p. 169. pl. 35?—Ib. Ind. Gen. et Syn. des Ois. du Gen. *Trochilus*, p. xvii?—Ib. Rev. Zool. 1838, p. 314?, and 1839, p. 19?

No one point connected with the family of Humming-Birds has been more puzzling to the Trochilidist than the attempt to identify the species intended to be represented by Lesson on the 35th plate of the Supplement to his 'Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux-Mouches,' and to which he has given the name of *Nouna-Koali*; unfortunately the typical specimen has been, I believe, irrecoverably lost, and, consequently, the matter can never be satisfactorily set at rest. Lesson's figure was evidently taken from a young bird, probably an immature *Cynanthus smaragdinaudus*; this, at least, is my own impression,—an opinion not participated in by my French coadjutors, since they are inclined to think that M. Lesson's plate represents a true *Lesbia*. M. Bourcier has sent me an example of a bird in a state of plumage which he considers to be that of the adult *Nouna-Koali*, but which I find to be identical with his *Eucharis*. My friend M. Edouard Verreaux has a bird in his collection which he considers to be the *Nouna-Koali*; but this again differs very materially from M. Bourcier's *Eucharis*, and, indeed, from every other known Humming-Bird. In its affinities it is more nearly allied to the *Lesbia Gouldi* than to any other; but it is of much larger size, in which respect it approaches *Eucharis* and *Amaryllis*, but again differs from them in the form of the luminous throat-mark—a rounded gorget of brilliant green, precisely similar to the throat-mark in *Lesbia Gouldi* and *L. gracilis*; the three species form, in fact, one of the three or four small sections into which the fork-tailed Humming-Birds appear to be naturally divided. In one of these sections we have *Phaon* and *Sparganurus*, to which the generic name of *Cometes* has been assigned; in another, *cyanurus* and *smaragdinaudus*, forming the genus *Cynanthus*; in the third, *Amaryllis* and *Eucharis*, constituting the genus *Lesbia*; and the fourth, for which no generic name has yet been proposed, comprising *gracilis*, *Gouldi*, and *Nuna* (the bird here represented).

With the exception of a female in my own collection (procured in Peru by M. Warszewicz), M. Verreaux's bird, for which I retain the appellation *Nuna*, is the only specimen I have ever seen; like my own, it was, I believe, received from Peru. It is an elegant and highly interesting species; its form graceful in the extreme. I trust that no disaster may befall M. Verreaux's specimen, and that, as the type from which my figure was taken, it will be long and carefully preserved.

With regard to the name of *Nouna-Koali*, M. Lesson says,—“Son nom est celui d'une vierge américaine dont le touchant souvenir restera parmi les amis de la littérature, grâce à la suavité des charmes dont s'est plu à l'embellir la plume de notre ami Ferdinand Denis.” See his historical romance entitled 'Ismaël Ben Kaïzar, ou la découverte du Nouveau Monde.'

The male has the crown of the head, back, wing-coverts, sides of the neck, and abdomen dark bronzy green; on the throat a rounded gorget of brilliant metallic grass-green; wings purplish brown; all the tail-feathers dark purplish black at the base, the apical half of all but the two outer ones luminous grass-green; the outer feather on each side washed, on its apical part, with metallic green, which increases in intensity to the apex; these feathers, moreover, are edged with pale brown on the basal half of the outer web.

The female is similarly coloured to the male on the upper surface, but has a shorter and less brilliantly coloured tail; the under surface is white, spangled with brilliant green.

The Plate represents two males and a female, of the natural size. The plant is the *Begonia cinnabarina*.