

while the bird is flying, the outer tail-feathers cross each other in the manner represented in the upper figures, which are an exact representation of the mounted specimen in the Loddigesian collection. Mr. Loddiges came to this conclusion in consequence of finding that they naturally fell into this position upon the skin being thoroughly damped for the purpose of mounting. These feathers cross each other twice, first near the base, and secondly towards the middle; consequently each spatule, as represented in the drawing, belongs to the feather of that side. How very remarkable is this arrangement, and how different from what is found to occur in any other known species!

It would be very interesting to see this bird on the wing; for I have no doubt that its greatly developed spatules serve in some way to sustain it in the air; and if so, this may account for the very diminutive size of its wings. It is just possible that, when the tail is fully spread, the spatules may be projected in front of the line of the head. Ornithologists will remember that several of the *Caprimulgidæ* possess enormously developed plumes—some in their wings, others in the tail. Can this, then, be a nocturnal bird—a representative of the Goatsuckers among the Humming-Birds? Such an idea has more than once recurred to me; and if so, its rarity would be readily accounted for.

Anxious to obtain examples of this singular bird for my own collection, I have repeatedly offered large sums to various persons for their procurement, but hitherto, I regret to say, without success. The specimen in the Loddigesian collection, which is beautifully mounted, and in the finest state of preservation, therefore remains unique; I need scarcely add that the female is unknown.

Crown of the head brilliant blue; neck, scapularies, back, wing- and tail-coverts golden green; on the throat a gorget of very brilliant green, tinged with blue in the centre, and bounded on each side by a narrow band of coppery red; sides of the breast and flanks dull white; the greatly prolonged shaft of the outer feather on each side and the large spatule at its tip violaceous black; centre tail-feathers shining glaucous green, passing into brown at their tips; bill and feet black.

The figures are of the natural size. The plant is the *Æchmea mucroniflora*.