

CALOTHORAX EVELYNÆ.

Bahama Wood-star.

Trochilus Evelynæ, Bourc. Proc. Zool. Soc., part xv. p. 44.—Ib. Rev. Zool. 1847, p. 256.

Calothorax Evelynæ, Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 110, *Calothorax*, sp. 9.

——— *Evelinæ*, Reich. Auf. der Col., p. 13.—Ib. Troch. Enum., p. 10.

Callothorax evillina, Bonap. Rev. et Mag. de Zool. 1854, p. 257.

Trochilus Bahamensis, Bryant, List of Birds seen at the Bahamas, &c., p. 5.

To be aware of the existence of a Humming-Bird on the principal of the Bahama Islands, and to fail in every attempt to procure a specimen of it during a period of thirty long years, seems scarcely possible, nevertheless such has been the case. Through the instrumentality of a friend at Liverpool, the late Mr. Swainson procured a male from New Providence about thirty years ago, and presented it to the late Mr. George Loddiges; from that date the bird appears not to have been noticed by any traveller or naturalist until 1859, when it was observed by Dr. Bryant during his four months' sojourn in the neighbourhood of Nassau in New Providence. It will be seen from the following note that it is by no means rare on at least the principal island of the Bahama group; indeed it would seem to be even more numerous than is usual with the other members of the group. I am very much indebted to my friend George N. Lawrence, Esq., of New York, for the loan of the two specimens of each sex for the purpose of the accompanying illustration, both of which were collected by Dr. Bryant, to whom much credit is due for the masterly manner in which he has described the birds of that little-known group of islands, the Bahamas. I regret exceedingly to be obliged to reduce the specific name of *Bahamensis* assigned to the bird by this gentleman to the rank of a synonym; but I have no alternative, that of *Evelynæ* having been given to it some years before by M. Bourcier, when describing some of the rarities contained in the Loddigesian collection.

The Bahama Wood-star may be ranked among the most beautiful members of its genus; but few of them possessing greater elegance of form, and certainly none a more lovely-coloured throat.

I append Dr. Bryant's observations on the bird, together with his description:—

“This species of Humming-Bird is the only one found at Nassau and neighbouring islands. It is quite abundant there, and a constant resident. All the specimens I procured, seven in number, were killed in February and the early part of March; at that time its food consisted almost entirely of a small green aphid, found abundantly on the West Indian vervain (*V. Stachytarpheta*), a small blue flower that grows in all the dry pastures. Gosse calls the least Humming-Bird of Jamaica the Vervain Humming-Bird, from its hovering round this plant; but the name would apply equally as well to the present species. I saw nothing in its habits differing from those of the common ruby-throated species, with the exception that it was more quarrelsome in its disposition, chasing the ‘fighter,’ as the *Tyrannus caudifasciatus* is called, whenever it came near him, and that its note is louder and shriller, and much more frequently uttered. Incubation commences by the 1st of March. I saw three nests of this bird: one, found on the 3rd of March, contained two eggs partly hatched; a second, April 10th, one egg; and another in May, two eggs. The nests are all composed of the same materials, principally the cotton from the silk cotton-tree, with a few downy masses that looked as if derived from some species of *Asclepias*; this was felted and matted together, and the outside stuck over with bits of lichen and little dry stalks or fibres of vegetable matter: one now before me measures .030 in diameter and .033 in height externally, and the inside .018 in depth and .025 in diameter. The eggs, like those of all the other members of the family, are two in number, snow-white when blown, and slightly rosy before, and measure .012 in length by .008 in breadth.

“*Description*.—Adult male:—Above, green with metallic reflexions, slightly golden on the back, and with the tips of some of the feathers in some specimens bluish; the head darker and more sombre; wings brownish purple, with dull greenish reflexions in some lights; tail dark purple, almost black, also with greenish reflexions; the outer feather on each side with an almost obsolete terminal spot of rufous, the next with the whole of the inner web bright cinnamon, the next again with the whole of the inner and the basal half of the outer web of the same colour, this colour then running nearly to the tip in a diagonal manner, leaving the part next the shaft purple; the basal half of all the shafts, except the two outer, cinnamon; throat magnificent purple-violet; immediately below this a broad gorget of white; abdomen green mixed with rufous; thighs white; crissum pale rufous white; bill and tarsi black.