

## THAUMASTURA ELIZÆ.

### Mexican Shear-tail.

*Trochilus Eliza*, Less. et DeLatt. Rev. Zool. 1839, p. 20.

*Myrtis Elisa*, Reich. Aufz. der Colibris, p. 13.

*Lucifer elisa*, Bonap. Rev. et Mag. de Zool. 1854, p. 257.

*Calothorax Eliza*, Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 110, *Calothorax*, sp. 8.

WE have here a Humming-bird of especial beauty; its colouring being so chaste and its form so elegant, that it is unsurpassed in loveliness by any other member of the section to which it belongs. It is indeed an object strictly in unison with the rich and fairy-like lands of which it is a native, namely Jalapa and the other genial provinces of Mexico. Few of the Trochilidæ are more rare, and few are the collections which contain examples; I, however, have the good fortune to possess a male and a female with their nest and eggs, all of which were procured at Cordova in Mexico by M. Sallé.

The first description of the species appeared in the "Revue Zoologique" for 1839, from the pen of M. DeLattre, a gentleman well acquainted with the Trochilidæ, but who unhappily is now no more, and who, it is to be feared, contracted the disease which terminated his useful life during his pursuit of this group of birds, of which he obtained many new species.

The following remarks, which are given in M. DeLattre's own words, comprise all that is at present known respecting this lovely bird:—

" Cette espèce, excessivement rare, a été rencontré dans le pays appelé le *Pas de Taureau*, entre la Vera Crux et Jalapa. Elle est très matinale, vit en société, et reste en repos depuis neuf heures du matin jusqu'à quatre heures du soir. Le mâle fait entendre en volant un bourdonnement assez fort. Il se couche tard et lorsqu'il ne voit absolument plus. Il se nourrit sur les arbres."

M. DeLattre named this species *Eliza* in honour of the wife of Dr. Amédée Lefèvre, Professor of Zoology and Materia Medica at Rochefort.

The male has the crown of the head bronzy-brown; sides of the head, back of the neck, all the upper surface of the body, upper and under wing-coverts and flanks of a rich shining golden hue; upper tail-coverts shining green; wings purplish-brown; chin and chest beautiful metallic violaceous-crimson; across the breast a broad gorget of white; centre of the abdomen, vent and under tail-coverts dull white; tail purplish-black, all but the outer feather on each side margined internally from the base to near the tip with deep sandy-buff; bill and feet blackish-brown.

The female has the crown greyish-brown; all the upper surface golden-green; wings purplish-black; central tail-feathers shining green, the remainder sandy-buff at the base, then black, and white at the tip; under surface white tinged with buff.

The nest is of a round, cup-shaped, but somewhat lengthened form, and is placed in the fork of a small upright branch: it is composed of a cottony material coated on the outside with a dark reddish-coloured moss, flat pieces of lichens, &c., bound together with cobwebs; the eggs as usual are white and two in number.

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