

THAUMASTURA CORÆ.

Cora's Shear-tail.

Ornismya Cora, Less. et Garn. Voy. de la Coq. Ois., pl. 13. fig. 4.—Less. Hist. Nat. des Ois. Mou., p. 52. pl. 6.—Ib. Les Troch., pp. 109, 111, pls. 39, 40.—Ib. Traité d'Orn., p. 275.—Ib. Man. d'Orn., tom. ii. p. 82.—Ib. Ind. Gen. et Syn. des Ois. du Gen. Troch., p. xxxii.

Calothorax cora, Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 110, *Calothorax*, sp. 6.

Trochilus Cora, Jard. Nat. Lib. Humming-Birds, vol. i. p. 129. pl. 25.—Tschudi, Faun. Peruana, p. 39.

Thaumastura cora, Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 85, *Thaumastura*, sp. 1.—Reich. Aufz. der Col., p. 13.—Bonap. Rev. et Mag. de Zool. 1854, p. 257.

THIS species has been named *Cora* by M. Lesson after the priestess of the Sun, so charmingly described by Marmontel in his romance of the Incas. It is not only a very beautiful and elegant bird, but it is rendered one of the most remarkable members of the entire group to which it pertains by the singular form of its tail, which curious structure, however, is confined to the male sex alone. The females of the *Cora*, the *Eliza*, the *Fanny*, and the *Yarrelli*, although very different from their respective males, are all remarkably similar to each other, which circumstance most clearly indicates that these birds belong to one group, or that at least they are very nearly allied.

The native country of the *Thaumastura Coræ* is Peru, over which it enjoys a rather wide range of habitat. It is often spoken of by travellers as occurring in abundance between the port of Callao and the city of Lima. Independently of this locality, I possess specimens brought from the interior of the country by M. Warszewicz, and one which is labelled as having been procured in one of the valleys of the Andes.

The male has the head, upper surface and wing-coverts golden-green; wings purplish-brown; throat metallic violaceous-crimson; under surface greyish-white; tail dull black, all but the outer feather on each side margined on the internal web from the base to near the tip with white.

The female has the head greyish-green; all the upper surface bronzy-green; wings purplish-brown, the outer feather on each side with a light-coloured shaft; two centre tail-feathers green, spotted with black near the end of the inner web and slightly fringed with white at the tip; lateral feathers blackish-brown with white; under surface buffy-white.

The young males differ very considerably from the adults of either sex: as might be supposed, the rich colouring of the throat is entirely wanting; on the other hand the tail is similar to that of the adult, but is neither so long nor so distinctly marked with black and white; the throat and under surface are dull grey, the former being indistinctly spotted with a darker colour.

The Plate represents three males, a young male, and a female, of the size of life. The plant is a species of *Mimosa*, copied from a drawing kindly lent to me by M. Bourcier.