

## CALOTHORAX PULCHRA, Gould.

### Beautiful Wood Star.

*Calothorax pulchra*, Gould in Ann. and Mag. of Nat. Hist., 3rd ser. vol. iv. p. 97.—Sclat. in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xxvii. p. 386.

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At a first glance this species might be easily mistaken for the bird known to English collectors as the "Mexican Star," and to the French as "Barbe-bleue,"—*Calothorax cyanopogon*. On a careful comparison, however, it will readily be seen that it is a very distinct species, inasmuch as it will be found to be much smaller in size, to have the thoracic patch much less prolonged on the sides, a shorter bill, and the outer tail-feathers of uniform breadth from the base to the tip, while in the Mexican Star these feathers are nearly filiform, and terminate in a sharp point. This is not so clearly shown in my figure of *C. cyanopogon* as I could wish, but the pointed form of its tail-feathers is very well depicted in the fifth plate of Lesson's 'Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux-Mouches.'

The native country of the Mexican Star is Xalapa and the high table-lands which surround and extend northward beyond the city of Mexico, while all the specimens I have ever seen of the present bird—*C. pulchra*—are from Oaxaca, a country much farther to the southward and westward.

For the knowledge of the existence of this fine bird we are indebted to M. Sallé of Paris, a gentleman who has travelled much, and collected with a zeal which entitles him to the thanks of every scientific man; and as the health and energies of M. Sallé are still unimpaired, we may hope that his peregrinations are not yet terminated, and that he may be the means of making us acquainted with many of the interesting products of the New World which have yet to be brought to light.

As is usual with the other species of the genus *Calothorax*, the female of the *C. pulchra* differs very considerably in colouring from her mate, not having a trace of the brilliant hues which adorn the male.

The male has a gorget of fine deep metallic lilaceous purple on the throat; the head, upper surface, wing-coverts and flanks green; wings purplish brown; tail brownish black; breast and centre of the abdomen white; bill black; feet dark brown.

The female has the head dull greyish brown; upper surface bronzy green; throat and under surface buff; wings purplish brown; the centre tail-feathers green; the next on each side green, tipped with black; the remainder rusty red at the base and white at the tip, the intervening space being black.

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