

THALURANIA FURCATA.

Cayenne Wood-Nymph.

- Mellisuga Jamaicensis, violacea, cauda bifurca*, Briss. Orn., tom. iii. pp. 728, 732. pl. xxxvii. fig. 6.
—Id., 8vo, tom. ii. p. 40.
- Trochilus furcatus*, Gmel., Edit. Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 486.—Lath. Ind. Orn., vol. i. p. 304.
—Jard. Nat. Lib., Humming-birds, vol. i. p. 125. pl. 23.—Vieill. Ency. Méth. Orn.,
part ii. p. 572.—Shaw, Gen. Zool., vol. viii. p. 309.—Ib., Steph. Cont., vol. xiv.
p. 239.
- L'Oiseau-mouche violet à queue fourchue*, Buff. Hist. Nat. des Ois., tom. vi. p. 37.—Vieill. Ois.
Dor., tom. i. p. 71. pl. 34.
- L'Oiseau-mouche à queue fourchue*, Buff. Pl. Enl. 599. fig. 2.
- Ornismya furcata*, Less. Hist. Nat. des Ois.-mou., pp. xiv, 82. pl. 18.—Ib. Ind. Gen. et Syn.
des Ois. du gen. *Trochilus*, p. xxij.—Ib. Traité d'Orn. p. 273.
- Polytmus furcatus*, Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 108, *Polytmus*, sp. 61.
- Thalurania furcata*, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part xx. p. 8.—Bonap. Rev. et Mag. de Zool.
1854, p. 254.—Reichenb. Aufz. der Col., p. 7.
- *furcatus*, Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 76, *Thalurania*, sp. 1.
- Lesser Fork-tailed Humming-bird*, Lath. Gen. Syn., vol. ii. p. 75?—Ib. Gen. Hist., vol. iv. p. 297?
- Furcated Humming-bird*, Shaw, Nat. Misc., vol. xi. pl. 397.

It is impossible to say with certainty whether the bird described and figured by Brisson and the older authors be identical with the species here represented or not; if it be, they are certainly quite wrong in stating Jamaica to be one of its habitats, an error which I am surprised to find repeated by Lesson, Jardine, and other recent authorities; for so exclusively, in fact, does the bird inhabit the continent of South America, that I believe it never occurs in any of the islands, not even the adjacent one of Trinidad; it enjoys, indeed, a very restricted range, being confined to Cayenne and Guiana, and scarcely extending so far as the Amazon towards Brazil. The bird of the same form and style of colouring which is found about Para, and which is usually considered to be the same, possesses, in the opinion of some, sufficient differences to warrant its being considered distinct, and to receive a separate appellation, that of *T. furcatoides*. Judging from the great numbers that are annually skinned and sent to Europe, this bird must be very numerous in Cayenne; it frequently arrives in hundreds at a time, consequently a considerable commerce exists between the dealers in Paris and the collectors in Cayenne. Being an exceedingly pretty and elegant species, great care is taken to obtain it only at that season of the year when it is in its finest plumage, and much attention is devoted to the making up of the skins. As is usual with all the members of this genus, the female is totally different from the male in colour, and considerably so in the form and character of the tail. It is surprising how few of this sex are prepared, which is doubtless due to their plumage being too dull and unattractive to demand attention.

The male has the crown of the head, back of the neck, back and wing-coverts black in some lights, deep green in others; throat shining grass-green; band across the back and shoulders violet; under surface beautiful deep violet-blue; wings purplish brown; tail bluish black; under tail-coverts brown, margined with grey.

The Plate represents both sexes of the size of life. The plant is the *Opuntia Salmiana*.