

## HELIOPÆDICA XANTUSI, Lawr.

### Xantus's Humming-Bird.

*Amazilia Zantusii*, Lawr. in Ann. Lyc. Nat. Hist. in New York, April 9, 1860, female.

*Heliopaedica castaneocauda*, Lawr. in Ann. Lyc. Nat. Hist. in New York, April 23, 1860, male.

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It is pleasing to mark the progress which science has made during the present century, and to note the important discoveries which have been the result of that impetus which has induced the mind of man to search the heavens for a new planet, or to transport himself to the distant and untrodden lands of our globe for the purpose of seeking for novelties in animal and vegetable life; nor is it less pleasing to the man of science to make known and to record the important information that has thus been acquired. It may be fairly stated that America has sons who will be second to none in the employment of their energies in this direction; for many of them are already actively engaged in zoological pursuits, and others are travelling in distant lands in order to add to our store of knowledge; among the latter may be especially mentioned the discoverer of the present highly interesting species of Humming-Bird, of whom Mr. Lawrence, after describing the bird in the 'Annals of the Lyceum of Natural History in New York,' thus speaks: "Specimens were sent to the Smithsonian Institution by Mr. John Xantus, whose investigations of the ornithology of western North America have been the means of adding many new birds to science; in compliment to him I have named it."

I may state that the *Heliopaedica Xantusi* and the *H. melanotis* are the only species of this particular form that have yet been discovered. The latter is a native of Mexico and Guatemala, the former an inhabitant of California; but over what portions of that country its range extends is unknown. The specimens sent to the Smithsonian Institution were procured at Cape Lucas.

I cannot close this notice without recording my best thanks to the Secretaries of the Smithsonian Institution for their liberality in permitting this rare species to be transmitted to me for the purpose of enriching the present work; neither am I less obliged to my friend Mr. Lawrence for his attention in making me speedily acquainted with Mr. Xantus's discovery of a new Humming-Bird in what I presume may be considered as a part of the North American States.

"This species," says Mr. Lawrence, "is a near ally of *H. melanotis*, but differs in the head being black instead of sapphire-blue, in the green plumage being of a much darker shade, the abdomen rufous, in place of grey, and in the dark chestnut colour of the tail, which is mostly black in *melanotis*."

The following is Mr. Lawrence's description of the two sexes; but I must premise that, as the male had been placed in spirits, the colours he describes are probably a little darker than those of the bird when alive.

"Male.—Front, crown, chin, and a continuous line running below and beyond the eye, black; a white line extends backward from behind the eye, and borders on the black; the upper plumage is grass-green; tail dark chestnut-red, as are also the shafts; the lateral feathers are somewhat lighter in colour; the two central feathers have a margin of golden bronze extending entirely round them, the other tail-feathers have a narrow edging of dull black encircling their ends; wings purplish brown; throat brilliant grass-green; sides and under wing-coverts grass-green; abdomen and under tail-coverts dull rufous; tarsi clothed with pale rufous feathers; bill flesh-colour for three-quarters of its length, with the end black; feet blackish brown.

"Female.—Front adjoining the bill and lores bright rufous; crown dark ash, with a tinge of pale purple, on a side view dull green; upper plumage and upper wing-coverts light shining green in some lights, golden, paler and more golden on the upper tail-coverts, which are edged with rufous; the two central tail-feathers light shining green, golden at the end; the other tail-feathers are chestnut-red, becoming gradually paler to the outer ones; the two feathers next the middle ones on each side have longitudinal black spots on the outer side of both webs near the end, scarcely reaching to the shaft, these spots are bronzed; the next feather has the same marks, but less in extent, and on the outer web being merely a marginal line; on the outer feather it consists of only a small spot on the edge of the inner web; the shafts of all the tail-feathers are red; wings purplish brown, edged on the bend of the wing with pale rufous; over the eye is a stripe of pale rufous, which is continued and becomes broader over the ears, where it is white; below the eye and extending along the side of the neck and under the white stripe is one of dull rufous brown; under surface of the body of a uniform rather pale rufous, on the sides of the breast and of the body under the wings intermixed with green; under wing-coverts green, marked next the body with rufous; vent white; under tail-coverts pale rufous; upper mandible black, under flesh-coloured for about half its length, dusky black at the end; tarsi clothed with pale rufous feathers; feet black."

The figures represent both sexes of the natural size. The plant is the *Ceanothus Veitchianus*.