

## RAMPHASTOS BREVICARINATUS, Gould.

### Short-billed Toucan.

#### SPECIFIC CHARACTER.

*Ramph. rostro brevi, compresso, fasciâ, angustâ nigrâ basali circumdato, apice sanguineo; mandibulâ superiore viridi, culmine maculâque utrinque aurantio-flavis; gutture pectoreque luteis, hoc torque sanguineo infra succincto.*

General plumage black with a pale wash of rufous at the back of the neck, and a gloss of green on the back, wings, abdomen and tail; upper tail-coverts white; under tail-coverts blood-red; cheeks, throat and breast yellow, bounded below with a band of scarlet; bill light green, passing into deep red on the tips of both mandibles; along each side of the upper mandible an oblong patch of reddish orange; both mandibles bounded at the base with a narrow line of black, and both marked near the tomia with indistinct transverse rays of black; orbits verditer-green, passing into yellow on their outer margin; feet blue, tinged with lilac on their under surface.

Total length, 14 inches; bill,  $4\frac{1}{2}$ ; wing, 7; tail, 6; tarsi,  $1\frac{1}{2}$ .

From the time I commenced the study of the various members of this group of birds, I have always felt convinced that the Mexican Keel-billed Toucans constituted more than a single species; for upon examining the fine collection of the Prince Massena at Paris, while engaged on the first edition of this work, I found two fully adult specimens differing considerably in all their admeasurements, and especially in the length of the bill, which in one was fully a third longer than that of the other, while there was no marked difference in their depth; in the smaller bird the yellow of the breast was separated from the black of the under surface by a well-defined and somewhat broad band of blood-red, of which there was either a very slight or no trace in the larger one; subsequently I saw other examples in some of the continental museums, but was undecided as to the propriety of characterizing them as distinct; the British Museum, however, having been lately enriched with specimens of the short-billed species sent direct from the western side of the isthmus of Panama, all of which are alike in admeasurement, and have well-defined pectoral scarlet bands, I have considered it only right to define and give a representation of the short-billed bird, leaving it for future explorers to determine whether it be really distinct or only a local variety. Its specific characters are a short and deep bill, whence the name *brevicarinatus*, accompanied by a bright scarlet band on the chest. My attention has been lately called to a third variety or species, intermediate between the two, but from a different locality—New Grenada; the first instance that has come under my notice of a Keel-billed Toucan being found south of the Isthmus of Panama.

The collection of the Prince Massena above alluded to is now in the Museum at Philadelphia; the American ornithologists will therefore have an opportunity of investigating the subject, and of giving an opinion as to the specific value of *Ramphastos brevicarinatus*.

The figures are of the natural size.