

## PHAËTHORNIS AUGUSTI.

Sallé's Hermit.

*Trochilus Augusti*, Bourc. Ann. des Sci. Phys. &c. de Lyon, tom. x. p. 623.

*Phætornis Augusta*, Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 104, *Phætornis*, sp. 19.

——— *augusti*, Bonap. Consp. Troch. in Rev. et Mag. de Zool. 1854, p. 249.

*Phaëtornis augustae*, Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 68, *Phaëtornis*, sp. 19.

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IN form and general contour the *Phaëthornis Augusti* is so nearly allied to the *P. Pretrei*, that were skeletons of both placed side by side, I apprehend it would be most difficult if not impossible to distinguish one from the other; still I have no doubt as to their specific value, and I am quite sure that no ornithologist would question their being quite distinct. They beautifully represent each other in the countries they respectively inhabit. The present species, *P. Augusti*, is a native of the rich countries of Venezuela and Caraccas. I have never seen it in collections from Bogota, or any of the more elevated regions; we may consequently infer that the forests of the lowland countries I have mentioned constitute its principal if not sole habitat. If the *P. Augusti* and *P. Pretrei* differ at all in size, the former may be considered the smallest; it also differs from its near ally in being rather less beautifully bronzed on the upper surface, in having narrower central tail-feathers, and especially in the hue of the under surface, which is lively grey instead of rich fawn colour, a feature by which it may be at once distinguished. This somewhat rare species was described for the first time by M. Bourcier, in 1847, when it was dedicated by him to M. Auguste Sallé, an enterprising traveller who collected numerous species of the Trochilidæ and other groups of birds during his journeys into the interior of Central America.

As is the case with the other members of the genus, the sexes are alike in plumage, and nearly so in size: figures of both are given on the accompanying Plate. The plant is the *Stemonacanthus macrophyllus*, which is very generally diffused over the northern parts of South America.

Upper surface greyish bronze, becoming more bronzy on the back; upper tail-coverts rust-red; wings purplish brown; central tail-feathers bronze, largely tipped with white and clouded with black at the junction of the two colours; the lateral feathers black at the base, crossed obliquely with black and tipped with white, the extent of the white increasing as the feathers approach the centre, and conspicuously so on those next the two middle ones; stripe above and another below the eye white; lores and ear-coverts black; under surface ashy grey, with a lighter streak down the throat; upper mandible and terminal fourth of the under mandible black; basal three-fourths of the under mandible blood-red.

The figures are of the natural size.