

Aglaiactis Castelnaudi, Cab. et Hein. Mus. Hein. Theil iii. p. 69, note.

Ornismya castelnaudii, Dev. Rev. et Mag. de Zool. 1852, p. 216.

Habitat. The mountains near Cusco in Peru.

M. Deville says, "This bird, which is very rare, confines itself to the blossoms of a species of *Mimosa*, the odours of which attract the small insects which form its food. Its cry is very piercing; its flight very rapid and noisy. The species, which is quite new, was killed by myself in the valley of Echaraté, near Cusco."

205. *AGLÆACTIS PAMELA* Vol. III. Pl. 181.

Aglaiactis Pamela, Cab. et Hein. Mus. Hein. Theil iii. p. 69.

Habitat. Bolivia.

Distinct from every other genus are the two species of *Oxygogon*. These bearded birds stand quite alone among the Trochilidæ; and although not remarkable for brilliancy of colour, their fantastic markings, towering crests, and lengthened beards render them very conspicuous objects. I shall not be surprised if other species of this form be discovered when the higher peaks of the great Andean range of mountains have been more closely examined.

For a long time the *Oxygogon Guerini* was the only species known; but in the year 1842 the intrepid traveller Mons. J. Linden ascended the high mountains of the Sierra Nevada de Merida, and was rewarded by the discovery of the second species, which bears his name.

Genus *OXYGOGON*, *Gould*.

(Ὀξύς, acutus, et πῶγων, barba.)

Generic characters.

Male.—*Bill* shorter than the head, feeble, and straight; *face* both above and below ornamented with lengthened plumes, the former erect, the latter pendent; *wings* rather long; *tail* large and forked when closed; *tarsi* bare; *feet* large and strong; *hind toe* and *nail* longer than the middle toe and nail.

Female.—Smaller, and destitute of the ornamental face-plumes.

206. *OXYGOGON GUERINI* Vol. III. Pl. 182.

Oxygogon Guerini, Reichenb. Aufz. der Col. p. 12; Id. Troch. Enum. p. 10; Cab. et Hein. Mus. Hein. Theil iii. p. 67.

Habitat. New Granada; plentiful around Bogota.

207. *OXYGOGON LINDENI* Vol. III. Pl. 183.

Oxygogon Lindeni, Reichenb. Aufz. der Col. p. 12; Id. Troch. Enum. p. 10; Cab. et Hein. Mus. Hein. Theil iii. p. 67, note.

Habitat. The Sierra Nevada de Merida in New Granada.

"This bird," says M. Linden, "inhabits the regions immediately beneath the line of perpetual congelation, and never at a less elevation than 9000 feet." It might be thought that such bleak and inclement situations were ill adapted for so delicate a structure as that of the Humming-Bird; but there, and there only, does it dwell, while the equally lofty Paramos of Bogota are the native locality of the allied species *O. Guerini*. The minute insects which frequent the alpine flora of these districts afford abundance of food to these birds; and beautifully constructed are their little bills for searching among the flowers in which they are found.

Near the members of the genus *Oxygogon* are the various species of *Ramphomicron*, another bearded group, but differing in the total absence of any lengthened plumes on the crown, and in the structure and colour of the pendent chin-feathers. It will only be necessary to glance at the plates on which these species are depicted to perceive that, though they bear a general resemblance to the *Oxygogons*, they are generically distinct from them. Their short and feeble bills indicate that they feed on a similar kind of insect food; and we know that such flowers as those of *Sida* and other plants with open corollas are frequently visited for the insects which abound therein.

It is said that the members of this genus fly with great rapidity, and that, like flashes of light, they are constantly dashing about the hill-sides from one flower to another. It must be extremely interesting to watch the aerial movements of these comparatively large birds among the lofty regions they frequent, and where the air is so pure and rarefied. In all the hilly countries, from the Caribbean Sea southward to Bolivia, are the members of this genus to be obtained; in the neighbourhood of Bogota one of them is very common: this bird (the *R. heteropogon*) extends its range from thence to about the latitude of Popayan, while the little *R. microrhynchum* is equally abundant