

firmly in its place. This nest was remarkably shallow; so much so that, if it had not contained its two eggs, I should have pronounced it far from complete. It may be that, being based on a firm foundation (one not nearly so liable to oscillation by the wind), the bird had found that a greater depth was not necessary to keep the eggs from falling out. Had she placed her nest on a slender twig, as seems to be usual, the case might have been different. The third nest had young. It was placed in the upper shoots of a Dahlia at the further end of the courtyard. The hen seemed to have the entire duty of rearing the young; for I never once saw the male near the place; in fact, I never saw a male inside the courtyard. When sitting she would sometimes allow me to go close to her, and even hold the branch still when it was swaying to and fro by the wind, without evincing the slightest alarm. But it was only when a hot sun was shining that she would allow me to do this; when it was dull or raining, four or five yards was the nearest I could approach. Frequently when I had disturbed her, I would sit down close at hand and wait for her return, and I always noticed that, after flying past once or twice overhead, she would bring a small piece of lichen, which, after she had settled herself comfortably in her nest, she would attach to the outside. All this was done with such a confident and fearless air, that she seemed to intimate, 'I left my nest purely to seek for this piece of lichen, and not because I was afraid of you.' When sitting upon her nest, the whole cavity was quite filled by her puffed-out feathers, the wings, with the exception of their tips, being *entirely concealed* by the feathers of the back. When the young were first hatched, they looked little, black, shapeless things, with long necks and hardly any beak. They soon, however, grew, and entirely filled the nest. I never saw the old bird sitting after the young had emerged from the eggs: she seemed to leave them alike in sun and rain. When feeding them she would stand upon the edge of the nest with her body very upright. The first of these young ones flew on October 15. It was standing on the side of the nest as I happened to approach, when it immediately flew off, but fell among the flowers below. I placed it in the nest, but a moment after it was off again, nothing daunted by its first failure—this second time with better success, for it flew over a wall close by and settled on a tree on the other side. In the evening I saw the old one feeding it, and went up to the tree; but it started off with increased vigour to an orange-tree, and tried at first to rest on one of the fruit, but failing, found a more appropriate perch on the edge of a leaf. I never saw it afterwards. The other young one flew two days later.

"The seeds of the willow and bulrush are favourite materials for the interior structure of the nest, while lichen is freely used outside."—*Ibis*, vol. ii. p. 264.

Genus TRYPHENA, Gould.

(Τρύφαινα, nom. prop.)

Generic characters.

Male.—Bill as long as the head, and straight; wings very small; primaries narrow; tail deeply forked, the outer feather narrow, tapering at the tip and incurved; feet small, claws short and hooked; gorget richly coloured but not luminous; tail ornamented.

Female.—Unadorned; tail extremely short.

The single species of this genus stands quite alone in the great family of Humming-Birds. The peculiar and beautiful markings of its tail are most remarkable; the colouring of the throat-mark is equally distinct. It must be remembered that these features are confined to the male, the female being very plainly attired, and having a very diminutive tail. Guatemala may well be proud of this singular bird, rich as her fauna really is.

177. TRYPHENA DUPONTI Vol. III. Pl. 158.

Trochilus Duponti, Jard. Nat. Lib. Humming-Birds, vol. i. p. 131, pl. 26.

Cynanthus Duponti, Id. ib. vol. ii. p. 145.

Trochilus lepidus, Licht. in Mus. Berol.

Tilmatura lepida, Reichenb. Aufz. der Col. p. 8; Id. Troch. Enum. p. 5, pl. 711. figs. 4610, 4611.

Thaumastura duponti, Bonap. in Rev. et Mag. de Zool. 1854, p. 257.

———*Duponti*, Cab. et Hein. Mus. Hein. Theil iii. p. 55, note.

Habitat. Guatemala.

"Following the course of the river of San Gerónimo up its bed to about half a league from the village, you come upon a small patch of forest with here and there open spots covered with *Salvia*. Here it was that this bird was shot, by a boy, who told me there were plenty; however, on visiting the place soon after, I was not successful in obtaining more specimens, nor was I fortunate enough to see one."—*Salvin* in *Ibis*, vol. ii. p. 266.