

your face!—in an instant it is gone!—now it flutters from flower to flower to sip the silver dew—it is now a ruby—now a topaz—now an emerald—now all burnished gold! It would be arrogant to pretend to describe this winged gem of nature after Buffon's elegant description of it.

“Cayenne and Demerara produce the same Humming-Birds. Perhaps you would wish to know something of their haunts. Chiefly in the months of July and August, the tree called Bois Immortel, very common in Demerara, bears abundance of red blossom, which stays on the tree for some weeks; then it is that most of the species of Humming-Birds are very plentiful. The wild Red Sage (*Salvia splendens*) is also their favourite shrub; and they buzz like bees round the blossoms of the Wallaba-tree; indeed there is scarce a flower in the interior, or on the sea-coast, but what receives frequent visits from one or other of the species.

“On entering the forests of the rising land in the interior, the blue and green, the smallest brown, no bigger than the humble-bee, with two long feathers in the tail, and the little forked-tail purple-throated Humming-Birds glitter before you in ever-changing attitudes.

“As you advance towards the mountains of Demerara, other species of Humming-Birds present themselves before you. It seems to be an erroneous opinion that the Humming-Bird lives entirely on honey-dew. Almost every flower of the tropical climate contains insects of one kind or other: now the Humming-Bird is most busy about the flowers an hour or two after sunrise, and after a shower of rain; and it is just at this time that the insects come out to the edge of the flower, in order that the sun's rays may dry the nocturnal dew and rain which they have received. On opening the stomach of the Humming-Bird, dead insects are almost always found there.”

“The Humming-Birds in Jamaica,” says Lady Emmeline Stuart Wortley in her Travels, “are lovely little creatures, and most wonderfully tame and fearless of the approach of man. One of these charming feathered jewels had built its delicate nest close to one of the walks of the garden belonging to the house where we were staying. The branch, indeed, of the beautiful shrub in which this fairy nest was suspended almost intruded into the walk; and every time we sauntered by, there was much danger of sweeping against this projecting branch with its precious charge, and doing it some injury, as very little would have demolished the exquisite fabric. In process of time, two lovely pear-like eggs had appeared; and while we were there we had the great pleasure of seeing the minute living gems themselves appear, looking like two very small bees. The mother-bird allowed us to look closely at her in the nest, and inspect her little nurslings, when she was flying about near, without appearing in the least degree disconcerted or alarmed. I never saw so tame or so bold a pet. But she did not allow the same liberties to be taken by everybody unchecked. One day, as Sir C—— was walking in the pretty path beside which the fragile nest was delicately suspended amid sheltering leaves, he paused in order to look at its Lilliputian inhabitants. While thus engaged, he felt suddenly a sharp light rapping on the crown of his hat, which considerably surprised him. He looked round to ascertain from whence the singular and unexpected attack proceeded: but nothing was to be seen. Almost thinking he must have been mistaken, he continued his survey, when a much sharper and louder rat-tat-tat-tat seemed to demand his immediate attention, and a little to jeopardize the perfect integrity and preservation of the fabric in question. Again he looked round, far from pleased at such extraordinary impertinence, when what should he see but the beautiful delicate Humming-Bird, with ruffled feathers and fiery eyes, who seemed by no means inclined to let him off without a further infliction of sharp taps and admonitory raps from her fairy beak. She looked like a little fury in miniature—a winged Xantippe. Those pointed