

"I wish it were in my power to impart to you, kind reader, the pleasures which I have felt while watching the movements and viewing the manifestations of feelings displayed by a single pair of these most favourite little creatures when engaged in the demonstration of their love for each other;—how the male swells his plumage and throat, and, dancing on the wing, whirls around the delicate female; how quickly he dives towards a flower and returns with a loaded bill, which he offers to her to whom alone he desires to be united; how full of ecstasy he seems to be when his caresses are kindly received; how his little wings fan her as they fan the flowers, and he transfers to her bill the insect and the honey which he has procured with a view to please her; how these attentions are received with apparent satisfaction; how, soon after, the blissful compact is sealed; how, then, the courage and care of the male is redoubled; how he even dares to give chase to the tyrant Flycatcher, hurries the Blue-Bird and the Martin to their boxes; and how, on sounding pinions, he joyously returns to the side of his lovely mate. Reader, all these proofs of the sincerity, fidelity, and courage with which the male assures his mate of the care he will take of her while sitting on her nest, may be seen, have been seen, but cannot be portrayed or described.

"Could you cast a momentary glance on the nest of the Humming-Bird and see, as I have seen, the newly-hatched pair of young, little larger than humble-bees, naked, blind, and so feeble as scarcely to be able to raise their little bill to receive food from the parents; and could you see those parents full of anxiety and fear, passing and repassing within a few inches of your face, alighting on a twig not more than a yard from your body, waiting the result of your unwelcome visit in a state of the utmost despair, you could not fail to be impressed with the interest of the scene. Then how pleasing it is, on your leaving the spot, to see the returning hope of the parents when, after examining the nest, they find their nestlings untouched! These are the scenes best fitted to enable us to partake of sorrow and joy, and to determine every one who views them to make it his study to contribute to the happiness of others, and to refrain from wantonly or maliciously giving them pain.

"A person standing in a garden by the side of a common *Althæa* in bloom, will be surprised to hear the humming of their wings, and then see the birds themselves within a few feet of him, as he will be astonished at the rapidity with which the little creatures rise into the air, and are out of sight and hearing the next moment.

"No bird seems to resist their attacks; but they are sometimes chased by the larger kinds of humble-bees, of which they seldom take the least notice, as their superiority of flight is sufficient to enable them to leave those slow-moving insects far behind in the short space of a minute.

"If comparison might enable you to form some tolerably accurate idea of their peculiar mode of flight and their appearance when on the wing, I should say that, were both objects of the same colour, a large *Sphinx* or moth when moving from one flower to another, and in a direct line, comes nearer the Humming-Bird in aspect than any other object with which I am acquainted."—*Audubon, Ornithological Biography*, vol. i. p. 248, &c. For the other portions of Wilson's and Audubon's very interesting observations, I must refer my readers to my account of *Trochilus Colubris*.

"Though least in size," remarks Mr. Waterton, "the glittering mantle of the Humming-Bird entitles it to the first place in the list of the birds of the New World. It may truly be called the Bird of Paradise; and had it existed in the Old World it would have claimed the title, instead of the bird which has now the honour to bear it. See it darting through the air almost as quick as thought!—now it is within a yard of