



RAMPHASTOS TOCO, *Auct.*

Toco Toucan.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER.

Ramph. rostro aurantiaco; fasciâ basali maculâque ovali utrinque ad apicem mandibule superioris nigris: ater; auribus, gulâ, pectore, caudæque tectricibus superioribus albis; inferioribus coccineis.

Variat torque angustâ coccineâ.

Beak rich orange, with a basal band of black, and a broad oval spot of the same colour on each side of the tip of the upper mandible; irides red; eyelids blue; naked space around the eyes red; top of the head and the whole of the plumage deep black, with the exception of the ear-coverts, throat, chest, and upper tail-coverts, which are white, and the under tail-coverts, which are scarlet; tarsi dull blue. In some examples, the white of the chest is bordered by a narrow line of scarlet.

Total length, 27 inches; bill, $7\frac{1}{2}$; wings, 10; tail, 7; tarsi, 2.

Toucan de Cayenne, appelé Toco. Buff., Pl. Enl., n. 82.

Ramphastos Toco. Auct.

Le Toco. Levaill., Ois. de Parad., 2. p. 7. t. 2. Azar. n. 50.

THIS magnificent species is one of the largest of the genus, and is remarkable for possessing a bill perhaps more disproportionate in size than is found in any other, by which circumstance and the rich colouring of the mandibles it may be at once distinguished. I would here also observe, that it seems to differ slightly from the rest of the Toucans, in having an unusually short and square tail, covered at its base by large white feathers. A few years ago this was a species rarely found in cabinets of natural history; latterly, however, it has been brought over more abundantly, and may now be met with in every museum of any extent. Though the *Ramphastos Toco* has the widest range of any species, being distributed throughout the whole of the wooded districts from the River Plate to Guiana, it is but thinly dispersed, and, according to the information afforded me by my friend Dr. Such, is extremely shy, and not procured without considerable difficulty, keeping to the tops of the highest trees, and exercising the utmost wariness and caution.

As with the rest of the genus, fruits compose the principal part of its food, and among these, it is said to be extremely partial to the banana.

The sexes offer little or no difference in colour, but the female may be always distinguished by her smaller size, and the comparatively inferior dimensions of the beak. The general colours of the young are also similar, but the beak is of course less developed, and is a considerable time before it attains its rich colouring and perfect size.