Crimson Topaz.

The countries of Cayenne, Trinidad, and Surinam, and the fluviatile regions of the Lower Amazon are the native habitats of this gorgeous species, which may be regarded not only as one of the gems of Ornithology, but as one of the most beautifully adorned species of the Trochilidae; I may also add that it is one of the oldest known members of the family, being mentioned in the works of every writer on natural history, from the days of Linnaeus to the present time; yet curiously enough, the only notice of its habits that has been recorded is that contained in Mr. Waterton's celebrated "Wanderings," which, brief as it is, is of the highest interest. Speaking of the Humming Birds observed by him in Cayenne and Demerara, he says—

"One species alone never shows his beauty to the sun; and were it not for his lovely shining colours, you might almost be tempted to class him with the Goat-suckers, on account of his habits. He is the largest of all the Humming-birds, and is all red and changing gold-green, except the head, which is black. He has two long feathers in the tail, which cross each other, and these have gained him the name of Kara-binite, or Ara Humming-bird, from the Indians. You never find him on the sea-coast, or where the river is salt, or in the heart of the forest, unless fresh water be there. He keeps close by the side of woody fresh-water rivers and dark and lonely creeks. He leaves his retreat before sunrise, to feed on the insects near the water; he returns to it as soon as the sun's rays cause a glare of light, is sedentary all day long, and comes out again for a short time after sunset. He builds his nest on a twig over the water in the unfrequented creeks; it looks like tanned cow-leather."

I have figured two adult males, and a third in a style of plumage which is generally supposed to be that of the female; it is believed by many, however, that this sex, when very old, assumes a plumage similar to that of the male. The eggs are white, two in number, and about five-eighths of an inch in length.
to that of the males, but never acquires the lengthened tail-feathers; a conclusion arrived at in consequence of specimens being frequently sent from Cayenne in this state, which after all may be that of immature males.

Head, lores, and a broad crescentic band passing down the sides of the neck and across the lower part of the throat deep velvety black; throat, within the black, lustrous greenish yellow, with a rich golden or topaz hue down the centre; back and wing-coverts rich deep red, passing into orange-red on the scapularies and lower part of the back; wings purplish brown; under-wing-coverts and base of the secondaries beneath rufous; upper tail-coverts and two centre tail-feathers bronzy green, the next tail-feather on each side brownish black, about half the breadth and thrice the length of the other tail-feathers, and with their basal third hidden by the central feathers; three outer feathers on each side reddish buff; across the breast a broad band of rich deep crimson; abdomen and flanks paler shining crimson; under-tail-coverts golden green; thighs white; bill black; feet yellow.

In the female, or young, the head and upper surface is shining green, washed with bronze on the back; wings purplish brown; upper tail-coverts bright shining green; two central tail-feathers dark green, tipped with black; two next on each side dull black; the two outer ones on each side dull brown at the base, and rufous for the remainder of their length; under surface golden, with a faint indication of the lustrous throat so conspicuous in the male; under-tail-coverts bright green; bill black; feet yellow.

The Plate represents two males and a supposed female on a species of *Epidendrum*, common to the country the bird inhabits.

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