ORANGE-CROWNED SWAMP-WARBLER.

† *HELINAIA CELATA*, Say.

PLATE CXII.—MALE AND FEMALE.

This species is seen in the company of *Sylvicola coronata* and *Sylvicola petechia*, both in the Southern States where it passes the winter, and while crossing the Union in early spring on its way to those North-eastern Districts where it breeds. It leaves Louisiana, the Floridas, and the Carolinas, from the beginning to the end of April; is seen in the Middle States about the 10th of May; and reaches the State of Maine and the British provinces by the end of that month. On its return, besides settling in the Southern States, it spreads over the provinces of Mexico, from whence individuals in spring migrate by the vast prairies, and along the shores of the western parts of the Union, entering Canada in that direction in the first days of June. The Orange-crowned Warbler is thus very widely distributed over North America. I met with none, however, between Halifax and Labrador, nor did I see one in the latter country.

In the summer months, it manifests a retiring disposition, keeping among the low brushwood that borders the rivers and lakes of the Northern Districts. While in the south, however, where it is rather common near the sea-shore, it is less cautious, and is seen, in considerable numbers, in the orange groves around the plantations, or even in the gardens, especially in East Florida. Like the *Sylvicola petechia*, it plays about the piazzas, skipping on wing in front of the clapboarded house, in quest of its prey, which it expertly seizes without alighting, or without snapping its bill, except during the disputes that occur among the males, as the spring advances. You find it among the branches of the Pride-of-China, a tree that ornaments the streets of the southern cities and villages, as well as on trees bordering the roads. From these it descends into the smilaxes, rose-bushes, and other shrubs, all of which yield it food and shelter. At the approach of darkness, it enters among the foliage of the evergreen wild orange and wild peach, where, with the *Sylvicola petechia* and *Sylvicola coronata*, it quietly passes the night. Its food principally consists of insects, partly caught on the wing, but chiefly along the branches and twigs, where the little depredator seeks them out with great activity.

The flight of this bird is short, rather low, and is performed by gently

curved glidings. When ascending, however, it becomes as it were uncertain and angular.

The Orange-crowned Warbler breeds in the eastern parts of Maine, and in the British provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Its nest is composed of lichens detached from the trunks of trees, intermixed with short bits of fine grass, and is lined with delicate fibrous roots and a proportionally large quantity of feathers. The eggs, which are from four to six, are of a pale green colour, sprinkled with small black spots. The nest is placed not more than from three to five feet from the ground between the smaller forks of some low fir tree. Only one brood is raised in the season, and the birds commence their journey southward from the middle of August to the beginning of September.

In autumn, it nearly loses the orange spot on its head, there being then merely a dull reddish patch, which is only seen on separating the feathers. In the breeding season, the part in question becomes as bright as you see it in the plate, in which are represented a pair of these birds, on a twig of the great huckleberry. The young do not shew any orange on the head until the following spring.

SYLVIA CELATA, Say, Long's Exped., vol. i. p. 169.

SYLVIA CELATA, Bonap. Syn., p. 38.

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER, *Sylvia celata*, Bonap. Amer. Orn., vol. i. p. 45.

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER, *Sylvia celata*, Nutt. Man., vol. i. p. 413.

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER, *Sylvia celata*, Aud. Orn. Biog., vol. ii. p. 449.

Adult Male.

Bill longish, slender, straight, tapering to a very sharp point. Nostrils basal, oval, feet of ordinary length, slender; tarsus compressed, covered anteriorly with a few long scutella, sharp-edged behind, longer than the middle-toe; toes scutellate above, free; claws arched, slender, compressed, acute.

Plumage blended, the feathers soft and tufty. Wings rather short, the second and third quills longest. Tail slightly emarginate, of ordinary length, the twelve feathers rather narrow, and tapering broadly to a point.

Bill dusky above, pale greyish-blue beneath. Iris hazel. Feet and claws dusky. The general colour of the plumage above is dull brownish-green, the rump and tail-coverts light yellowish-green, the edge of the wing at the flexure yellow. On the crown is a spot of bright reddish-orange, more distinct when the feathers are raised. The under parts are of a dull olivaceous yellow, the lower tail-coverts bright yellow. The quills and tail-feathers dark brown, slightly margined with paler.

Length $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches, extent of wings $7\frac{1}{2}$; bill along the ridge $\frac{5}{12}$, along the edge $\frac{1}{2}$; tarsus $\frac{9}{12}$.

Adult Female.

Bill and feet of the same colour as in the male, the former inclined to yellowish-grey beneath. The female wants the orange spot on the crown, but in other respects resembles the male in colour, although the rump and upper tail-coverts are of a darker tint.

Length slightly less than that of the male.

THE HUCKLEBERRY OR BLUE-TANGLES.

VACCINIUM FRONDOSUM, *Willd. Sp. Pl.*, vol. ii. p. 352. *Pursh, Flor. Amer.*, vol. i. p. 285.
—DECANDRIA MONOGYNIA, *Linn.*—ERICÆ, *Juss.*

Leaves deciduous, ovato-oblong or lanceolate, entire, smooth, glaucous beneath, resinous; racemes lax, bracteate; pedicels long, filiform, bracteolate; corollas ovato-companulate, with acute laciniae and included anthers. The flower is white, the calyx green, the berry globular and of a bluish-black colour. It varies greatly in the form of the leaves, as well as in stature, sometimes attaining a height of six or seven feet.

Huckleberries form a portion of the food of many birds, as well as of various quadrupeds. Of the former, I may mention in particular the Wild Turkey, several species of Grouse, the Wild Pigeon, the Turtle-dove, some Loxias, and several Thrushes. Among the latter, the Black Bear stands pre-eminent, although Racoons, Foxes, Opossums, and others destroy great quantities. When the season is favourable, these berries are so thickly strewn on the twigs, that they may be gathered in large quantities, and as they become ripe, numerous parties resort to the grounds in which they are found, by way of frolicking, and spend the time in a very agreeable manner.

Orange-crowned Swamp Warbler.

1. Male. 2. Female.

Huckleberry. Vaccinium frondosum!

Audubon, John James. 1841. "Orange-Crowned Swamp-Warbler, *Helinaia celata*, Say. [Pl. 112]." *The birds of America : from drawings made in the United States and their territories* 2, 100–102. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.319225>.

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