GENUS II.—TROGLODYTES, *Cuv.* WREN.

Bill of moderate length, or nearly as long as the head, slender, slightly arched, much compressed toward the end; upper mandible with the dorsal line slightly convex, the edges a little inflected toward the end, the notches slight, the tip rather acute; lower mandible with the angle rather long and narrow, the outline slightly decurved, the sides erect and convex, the edges inclinate, the tip acute. Nostrils oblong, operculate, exposed. Head oblong; neck short; body slender. Feet of ordinary length, rather strong; tarsus longer than the middle toe, compressed, with eight anterior distinct scutella; toes of moderate size, the third and fourth united at the base, the first very large, the lateral nearly equal; claws rather long, moderately arched, much compressed, very acute. Plumage soft and blended. Bristles obsolete. Wings of moderate length, or short, convex, much rounded; the first quill very small, the fourth and fifth longest. Tail rather short, rounded, of twelve slightly arched, weak, rounded feathers.

 ROCK WREN.
TROGLODYTES OBSOLETUS, *Say*.

PLATE CXVI.—ADULT FEMALE.

This species was discovered by some of Major LONG's exploring party, and first described by Mr. THOMAS SAY. My friend THOMAS NUTTALL, who had opportunities of studying its habits, during his recent journey in company with Mr. TOWNSEND, has assured me that they are very similar to those of the other Wrens. The figure in the plate was taken from an adult female, given to me by Mr. NUTTALL; and I have since then obtained two males.

"On the 21st of June," says Mr. NUTTALL, "on the ledges of the bluffs
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which border the bottom of Hare's Fork of the Siskadee (or Colorado of the West), I heard, and at length saw this curious Mountain Wren. Its actions are those of the Carolina species, *Troglodytes ludovicianus*. The old female (as I supposed) sat upon a ledge of rock at the head of a high ravine in the bluff, cocking her tail, and balancing herself, at the same time uttering a *tshurr*, *tshurr*, and *té aigh*, with a strong guttural accent, and now and then, when approached, like the common Short-billed Marsh Wren, *Troglodytes brevirostris*, a quick guttural *tshe de de*. It has also a shrill call at times, as it perches on a stone on the summit of some hill, again similar to the note of the Carolina Wren, occasionally interrupted by a *tshurr*. Among these arid and bare hills of the central table-land they were quite common. The old ones were feeding and watching a brood of four or five young, which, though fully grown, were protected and cherished with the querulous assiduity so characteristic of the other Wrens. They breed under the rocky ledges where we so constantly observed them, under which they skulk at once when surprised, and pertinaciously hide in security, like so many rats. Indeed so suddenly do they disappear among the rocks, and remain so silent in their retreat, that it is scarcely possible to believe them beneath your feet till after a lapse of a few minutes you begin to hear a low cautious chirp, and the next moment, at the head of the ravine, the old female probably again appears, scolding and jerking in the most angry attitudes she is capable of assuming. In the same rocky retreats they are commonly accompanied by a kind of small striped Ground Squirrel, like that of the eastern coast in many respects, but much smaller. These little animals, which are numerous, the White-chinned Buzzard, *Buteo vulgaris* of RICHARDSON and SWAINSON, and the Raven frequently hover over and pounce upon. We met with this species as far west as the lowest falls of the Columbia, or within a few miles of Fort Van Couver, but among rocks and cliffs as usual."

TROGLODYTES OBSOLETA, Say, Long's Exped.

TROGLODYTES OBSOLETA, Bonap. Amer. Orn., vol. i. p. 6.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN WREN, *Troglodytes obsoleta*, Nutt. Man., vol. i. p. 435.

ROCK WREN, *Troglodytes obsoletus*, Aud. Orn. Biog., vol. iv. p. 443.

Adult Female.

Bill nearly as long as the head, slender, slightly arched, compressed toward the end; upper mandible with the sides convex towards the end, flat and declinate at the base, the edges sharp and overlapping, with a very slight notch close to the declinate tip; lower mandible with the angle long and narrow, the dorsal line very slightly concave, the sides sloping outwards and

concave, the tip narrow. Nostrils oblong, basal, with a cartilaginous operculum, open and bare.

Head oblong; neck short; body slender. Legs of ordinary length; tarsus longer than the middle toe, compressed, with eight anterior distinct scutella, and two lateral plates forming a sharp edge behind. Toes of moderate size, the third and fourth united at the base, the first large, the outer considerably longer than the inner. Claws rather long, moderately arched, much compressed, with an abruptly tapering, very acute tip.

Plumage soft and loose. Wings of moderate length, convex, broad and rounded; the first quill very short, the second a quarter of an inch shorter than the third; the fourth longest, but scarcely exceeding the third and fifth. Tail rather long, much rounded, of twelve broad, rounded feathers.

Bill dusky, with the edges pale yellow. Iris hazel. Feet dusky. Upper parts light dull yellowish-brown, and, excepting the rump, transversely barred with greyish-brown; the wings barred in the same manner, excepting the primaries, which are plain; the secondary coverts with a small white spot near the tip. Tail-coverts barred like the back, as are the two middle tail-feathers; the others broadly tipped with pale yellowish-red, undulated with dusky; behind which is a broad band of brownish-black; the remaining or basal part banded like the central feathers, the outer feather with four reddish-white spots or bars on the outer web, the intervals being brownish-black, and a spot of white on the inner web. The lower parts are greyish-white, tinged with sienna, the sides inclining to yellowish-red. The lower tail-coverts are barred with brownish-black.

Length to end of tail 6 inches, wing from flexure $2\frac{1}{2}$; tail $2\frac{1}{4}$; bill along the ridge $\frac{9}{12}$; tarsus $\frac{9}{12}$; hind toe $\frac{4}{12}$, its claw $\frac{3}{12}$; middle toe $\frac{6}{12}$, its claw $\frac{2}{12}$.

SMILACINA BOREALIS, *Pursch*, Flor. Amer. Sept., vol. i. p. 233.—*HEXANDRIA MONOGYNIA*, *Linn.*

Leaves elliptico-obovate, ciliated; the scape pubescent, with a corymbose umbel. The flowers are large, and of a greenish-yellow colour; the fruit roundish, of a beautiful deep blue. It is extremely abundant in the dark woods of Maine, growing in moist places.

A.F.

Rock - Wren

Adult Female

Smilacina borealis

Audubon, John James. 1841. "Rock Wren, *Troglodytes obsoletus*, Say. [Pl. 116]." *The birds of America : from drawings made in the United States and their territories* 2, 113–115. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.319229>.

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