RAMPHASTOS CUVIERI, Wagl.

Cuvier's Toucan.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER.

Ramph. rostro tumido ad basin, brunneo-nigrescente, culmine luteo; genis, gutture, pectoreque albis lutescente-tinctis; tectricibus caudæ superioribus aurantiaco-flavis.

Male.—Crown of the head, back, wings, abdomen and tail black; throat white; breast pale yellow, bounded below by a crescent of fine deep scarlet; upper tail-coverts pale sulphur-yellow at the base, passing into rich orange; under tail-coverts deep scarlet; bill brownish black on the sides; culmen rich yellow, becoming pale horn-colour at the tip; across the base of the bill a broad band, which on the upper mandible is of a rich yellow hue, and on the under bluish lilac, the two colours blending into each other at the edges of the mandibles; immediately at the base of the bill a strong line of black; orbits bluish green, with a ring of bluish lilac around the eye; naked skin of the throat bluish green; above the orbits at the base of the upper mandible a small patch of white feathers; feet blue, with a lilac tinge on their under surface; nails black.

Total length, 23 inches; bill, $6\frac{1}{2}$; wing, $9\frac{1}{2}$; tail, $6\frac{1}{2}$; tarsi, 2.

Female.—Precisely similar in colour, but smaller in all her admeasurements, especially in the length of the bill.

Note.—The colouring of the soft parts differs in brilliancy at different seasons, according to the age and vigour of the bird.

Ramphastos Cuvieri, Wagl. Syst. Av. *Ramphastos*, sp. 5.—Less. Traité d'Orn., p. 171, *Ramphastos*, sp. 5.—Gould, Mon. of Ramph., pl. 2.—Ib. Sturm's Edit., pl.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. ii. p. 403, *Ramphastos*, sp. 2.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 92, *Ramphastos*, sp. 3.

Le Grand Toucan à gorge orange, Levaill. Hist. Nat. des Ois. de Parad., tom. ii. p. 15. pl. 5. (See note below.)

Ramphastos Forsterorum, Wagl. Syst. Av. *Ramphastos*, sp. 9.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, *Ramphastos*, sp. 3.

WHEN I published the first edition of this work, now nearly twenty years ago, a single specimen only of this fine Toucan had come under my notice, although I had personally examined most of the public museums and private collections in Europe; during the interval which has elapsed, much information has been obtained respecting the localities the bird inhabits, and the colouring of its soft parts, both of which were at that time comparatively unknown: I have had ample opportunities too of examining the numerous examples transmitted to England from several districts of the Lower Amazon by Messrs. Wallace and Bates, and to the Jardin des Plantes of Paris from Peru, by the celebrated traveller M. Alcide D'Orbigny. From the circumstance of so many examples being sent from the above-mentioned localities, I am induced to infer that

the whole of the extensive forests bordering the mighty Amazon, from its source amidst the lofty Andes to the sea, is inhabited by this noble bird ; I have also seen numerous specimens from Venezuela, and one from Santa Fé de Bogota. Some slight difference of size occurs in examples from these distant localities, the Venezuelan specimens being smaller and having shorter bills than the Amazonian, while those from Peru and Bogota are rather larger than either of the others : these variations are, however, too slight for the birds to be considered otherwise than as races of one and the same species.

In the perfect or newly moulted plumage, the breast of both sexes is washed with yellow, which colour appears to fade under the influence of a tropical sun, leaving the breast, until the next moult, of a pure white. In some specimens a narrow thread-like line of scarlet separates the black colour of the upper mandible from the yellow culmenal ridge ; and a slight tinge of red is sometimes observable near the base of the dark portion of the upper mandible of the Peruvian birds. In its affinities this species is more nearly allied to *R. erythrorhynchus* than to any other, but its rich orange-coloured upper tail-coverts will at all times enable the ornithologist to distinguish it. I mention this because the red colouring of the bill in *R. erythrorhynchus* sometimes gives place to black, a change induced either by a particular state of the bird (perhaps from being out of health), or from decomposition of the fine colour after death.

Note.—Le Grand Toucan à gorge orange of Levaillant is added as a synonym of this species on the authority of a passage in Sturm's Edition of this work, in which it is stated, that the late Mr. John Natterer had discovered that Levaillant has figured many made-up birds ; and that he had recently found the originals of two of his figures in the Royal Museum at Leyden ; one of which, the subject of his fifth plate, Le Grand Toucan à gorge orange, is certainly nothing more than a *Ramphastos Cuvieri* with the orange-coloured forepart of the neck, and the red of a *Ramphastos Ariel* added.

The accompanying Plate represents a fully adult Amazonian specimen of the natural size.

RAMPHASTOS CUVIERI. Wagl.

Gould, John. 1852. "Ramphastos cuvieri, Wagl., Cuvier's Toucan [Pl. 8]." *A monograph of the Ramphastidae, or family of toucans* –.
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