TROGON MEXICANUS, SW.

TROGON MEXICANUS, Swainson.

Mexican Trogon.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER.

Trog. supra nitenti-viridis, pectore dorsoque concoloribus; gutture, regione auriculari alisque nigris, his cinereo punctatis; torque pectorali albâ; ventre crissoque coccineis; rectricibus duabus intermediis viridibus nigro terminatis, duabus proximis utrinque nigris, reliquis basaliter nigris latè albo terminaliter fasciatis.

Fœm. Suprà olivascenti-brunnea, pectore dorsoque concoloribus, hœc vix rufescente lavato; torque pectorali cinerascente obsoletâ; corpore reliquo subtilis coccineo; alis nigris brunneo parçè maculatis; remigibus externis albo fimbriatis; rectricibus duabus intermediis castaneis nigro apicatis, duabus proximis utrinque nigris, reliquis albo nigroque fasciatis; rostro brunneo, mandibulâ flavâ.

Adult male.—Beak bright yellow; throat and ear-coverts black, gradually blending with the green which covers the chest and the whole of the upper surface; two centre tail-feathers green, with black tips, the two next on each side wholly black, the three outer feathers on each side black, with white tips; wings black, with the exception of the primaries dotted with grey; on the chest a crescentic band of white; breast, belly, and under tail-coverts a fine scarlet; feet brown.

Total length from 11 to 12 inches; wing $5\frac{3}{4}$; tail $7\frac{3}{4}$.

Adult female.—The top of the head, throat, chest, and back dark brown, inclining to olive on the upper surface and to rufous on the chest; across the latter an obscure band of light grey; the upper part of the belly brownish grey, the lower part and vent scarlet; wings black, slightly freckled with brown on the outer edges of the secondaries and shoulders, the outer edges of the primaries fringed with white; two middle tail-feathers chestnut-brown tipped with black, the two next on each side wholly black, the remainder strongly barred with black and white for nearly their whole length; bill yellow, clouded with brown.

Trogon mexicanus. Swains. Phil. Mag. 1827, p. 440.—Id. Zool. Illustr. 2nd ser. pls. 82, 107.—Gould, Monogr. Trogon. pls. 1, 2.—Gray, Gen. B. i. p. 70.—Id. Cat. Fissir. Brit. Mus. p. 41.—Bp. Consp. i. p. 150.—Selater, P. Z. S. 1858, pp. 367, 387.—Scl. & Salv. Ibis, 1859, p. 132, et 1860, p. 41.—Selater, Cat. Am. B. p. 276.—Cab. & Heine, Mus. Hein. iv. p. 168.—Gray, Hand-l. B. i. p. 82.—Scl. & Salv. Nomencl. Av. Neotr. p. 103.

——— *glocitans*, Licht. Preisverz. mex. Th. v. Deppe u. Schiede, p. 1, et Journ. f. Orn. 1863, p. 55.

“——— *morgani*, Swains.” Gould, Mon. Trog. ed. 1.

Trogonurus mexicanus. Bp. Consp. Vol. Zyg. p. 14.

SINCE the first edition of the present Monograph but little has been added to the history of this beautiful Trogon. Great difficulty often attaches to the identification of the young male, which differs from the adult in having white bars on the tail-feathers. However, in the other edition, I was able to figure a young male, lent me by Mr. John Taylor, which shows the assumption of the uniform black tail, and thus precludes the idea that these individuals with different-coloured tails belong to different species. Mr. Taylor's specimens

were from Real del Monte, in Mexico; and it has been collected at Oaxaca by M. Boucard, and at Jalapa by De Oca. Although chiefly known from Mexico, this species goes as far as Guatemala, where Mr. Salvin met with it on the Volcan de Fuego. He gives the following note respecting the species:—"The colour of the eyelid of this species, both in the male and female, almost exactly corresponds with the red colour of the breast in each, that of the male being much more brilliant than that of the female, in fact bearing the same ratio to it as the colour of its breast to that of the female's breast. It is probable that in many cases the colour of the soft parts about the eye &c. may be determined by reference to some portion or portions of the plumage where it is exactly represented. In the Trogons this seems eminently the case. A few days ago I shot a pair of *Trogon caligatus*, in which the colour of the eyelid in the male was exactly represented by the colour of the yellow breast, that of the female by the fainter yellow of its breast. The same is the case with *T. puella*. I think, therefore, that with tolerable safety the eyelids of these American Trogons may be said to correspond with the colour of the breast. It certainly is true in all cases which I have noticed."

The following has been kindly sent to me by Mr. Salvin:—

"The Mexican Trogon, as its name implies, is found in Mexico; and, as collections made in the highlands of that country seldom fail to contain examples, it would appear to be a common bird. Besides the valley of Mexico, it occurs in the State of Vera Cruz, whence specimens have been forwarded from Jalapa by M. de Oca. Mons. A. Boucard, too, found it in the State of Oaxaca, near Cinco Señores. In Guatemala *Trogon mexicanus* enjoys a wide range throughout the higher districts. I met with it in the Volcan de Fuego and also in Vera Paz, near Coban, in the valley of the Motagua, as well as in the woods overlooking the Plain of Salamá; and it is doubtless to be seen in all suitable forests in the mountainous districts. Guatemala, however, would appear to be the extent of its range in a south-easterly direction, as it has not yet been noticed in any of the other Central-American republics.

"Like other members of this family, *Trogon mexicanus* is found in forests, usually sitting on the lower branches of the high trees. When at rest it sits almost motionless; but its flight from one branch to another is quick though not sustained, as they never fly far. I found them most abundant in evergreen-oak woods. These oaks clothe, with greater or less density, the mountain-sides from an elevation of 5000 to about 7500 feet, and some of them (for there are many species in Guatemala) grow into magnificent trees. *Trogon mexicanus*, however, does not keep strictly to the oak-woods, for on one occasion I was lucky enough to be shown a nest in a tree forming part of a scrubby forest at an elevation of not more than 3000 feet, *i. e.* considerably below the oak-region. This was at a place called Chuacus, a small village in Vera Paz, situated in a valley which runs into the great valley of the river Motagua. This nest was in a hole in the bole of a small tree, about 15 or 20 feet from the ground. The male bird flew out, and I secured the eggs, three in number. They were slightly pointed, and of a very pale greenish colour, not pure white when fresh. There was no nest, the eggs being laid on the floor of the hole."

The young male of this species has bars on the tail, which would lead many persons to suppose pertained to another; but this is not the case.

Nothing further seems to have been recorded respecting the habits and economy of the Mexican Trogon.

The figures are from a pair of birds in my own collection.

The Plate represents male and female, of the size of life.

Gould, John. 1875. "Mexican Trogon, Trogon mexicanus, Swainson." *A monograph of the Trogonidæ or trogons* 3, -. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.323639>.

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