CHARACTERS OF A NEW AMERICAN FAMILY OF PASSERINE BIRDS.

By ROBERT RIDGWAY,

Curator of the Department of Birds.

IN "The Auk",¹ Mr. F. A. Lucas, curator of the department of comparative anatomy in the National Museum, has called attention to the notable characters presented in the skull of the genus *Procnias*, Illiger, at the same time remarking that my proposed establishment of a new family for its reception "is certainly warranted by the cranial characters of the genus." Although I had already drawn up a diagnosis of the external characters of the family, circumstances have until now prevented its publication. The diagnosis is herewith presented, the osteological and pterylographical characters being given in a separate paper by Mr. Lucas.²

Family PROCNIATIDÆ.

SWALLOW-TANAGERS.

Procniatinæ [*Tanagridæ*] SCLATER, Cat. Am. Birds, p. 54, 1862. (Subfamily.)

External characters.—Bill triangular, depressed, extremely broad at base but compressed at tip, the lateral outline changing from convex basally to concave terminally; gape very long, extending to beneath anterior angle of eye; gonys less than half as long as commissure and much less than breadth of bill at base; culmen sharply ridged, strongly recurved terminally; tip of maxilla slightly notched; nostrils exposed, very small, circular, surrounded by a slightly raised rim. Tarsi short (about as long as commissure, shorter than middle toe with claw), scutellate anteriorly, caligate posteriorly, the hinder margin contracted into a sharp edge; lateral claws not reaching base of middle claw; hind claw much stouter than middle claw. Wings long (more than five times as

¹April, 1895, p. 186.

²Mr. Lucas' paper (Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., XVIII, 1895, p. 451) follows immediately after the present one.

long as tarsus); tip of longest primary exceeding that of ninth by a little more than length of tarsus and half of middle toe; second and third quills longest, first and fourth but little shorter. Tail more than half as long as wing, nearly even or very slightly emarginated. Plumage blended, glossy; remiges and rectrices very firm, almost rigid. Color mainly blue (greenish in female), the sides and flanks barred with black. Nest in holes; eggs pure white.

Range.—Neotropical region (Brazilian and Amazonian provinces, and northeastern portion of Colombian province).

Ridgway, Robert. 1896. "Characters of a new American family of passerine birds." *Proceedings of the United States National Museum* 18(1076), 449–450.
<https://doi.org/10.5479/si.00963801.1076.449>.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/32799>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5479/si.00963801.1076.449>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/5719>

Holding Institution

Smithsonian Libraries

Sponsored by

Smithsonian

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: NOT_IN_COPYRIGHT

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.