

## CHARACTERS OF A NEW AMERICAN FAMILY OF PASSERINE BIRDS.

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IN "The Auk",<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

### 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

<sup>1</sup>April, 1895, p. 186.

<sup>2</sup>Mr. 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).