

gigas) is a very large bird for the delicate family to which it belongs; when on the wing its appearance is singular. Like others of the genus, it moves from place to place with a rapidity which may be compared to that of *Syrphus* among flies, and *Sphinx* among moths; but while hovering over a flower, it flaps its wings with a very slow and powerful movement, totally different from that vibratory one common to most of the species which produces the humming noise. I never saw any other bird where the force of its wings appeared (as in a butterfly) so powerful in proportion to the weight of its body. When hovering by a flower, its tail is constantly expanded and shut like a fan, the body being kept in a nearly vertical position. This action appears to steady and support the bird between the slow movements of its wings. Although flying from flower to flower in search of food, its stomach generally contained abundant remains of insects, which I suspect are much more the object of its search than honey. The note of this species, like that of nearly the whole family, is extremely shrill.