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Publisher: Taylor & Francis
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Annals and Magazine of Natural History: Series 2

Publication details, including instructions for
authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/tnah08>

The operculum of Diplommatina

Capt. Thomas Hutton

Published online: 23 Dec 2009.

To cite this article: Capt. Thomas Hutton (1855) The operculum of
Diplommatina, Annals and Magazine of Natural History: Series 2, 16:94,
300-300, DOI: [10.1080/037454809495538](https://doi.org/10.1080/037454809495538)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/037454809495538>

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species, I should have considered it identical with *Euplectes erythrops*, Hartl., with which I am not acquainted in nature, but which is described and figured with care in the second volume of the 'Abhandlungen' of the Natural History Society of Hamburg, 1852. This bird has only a little red round the base of the bill and above the eyes, whilst the new species has the whole of the head of a fine uniform blood-red, and the throat and front of the neck are spotted with red and black.

Nor is it likely that the difference between these birds is sexual, as Hartlaub gives descriptions of both sexes of his *E. erythrops*, and states that the female is yellow where the male is red.

6. *Chrysomitris xanthogastra*. Mas. C. nigerrima subnitens; speculo lato alarum, rectricum basi, exceptis duabus intermediis, et abdomine cum hypochondriis et crisso aureo-flavis. Rostro cærulescenti-nigro; pedibus brunneo-nigris.

Total length 9 centim. (about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches).

Hab. Ocaña, New Granada.

This is one of the smallest species of the genus. In its colour it resembles the *Carduelis atratus*, D'Orb., but differs in its size, which is about one-fourth less.—*Bull. de l'Acad. Roy. de Belgique*, xxii. p. 150–152, 1855.

The Operculum of Diplommata. By Capt. THOMAS HUTTON.

The operculum of *Diplommata folliculus* having been overlooked, from its small size and hidden position, in the original description, Mr. Benson was inclined to doubt its existence, but afterwards corrected his former opinion. Captain Hutton formerly believed it might be a *clausium*, attached to the shell by an elastic ligament: he has recently most kindly written me a note, in which occurs the following passage, setting this question at rest: "Having placed my specimens upon some wet and withered oak leaves (*Q. incana*), which the animal prefers to anything else, I waited, magnifier in hand, to decide the knotty point of operculum or no operculum, and lo! when the animal came forth, I saw the little shield-like operculum carried horizontally upon the back of the animal, and not attached to the shell. When the animal is just coming out of the shell, the appendage is plain with the aid of a glass, but not so easily seen when in full motion, as it lies upon the back of the animal, just under the shell, and is thus in a measure hidden."—J. E. GRAY.

Note on the Aphyllanthes monspeliensis, and the new Family of the Aphyllanthaceæ. By M. PARLATORE.

The *Aphyllanthes monspeliensis* is a plant which has the aspect of a little rush, or rather that of the *Dianthus prolifer*; it grows abundantly in the stony, sterile parts of the basin of the Mediterranean, in the south of France as far as Nice, in Spain, Portugal and Algeria. This plant was first described and figured by Pena and Lobel, who did not fail to notice a certain resemblance between its flowers and