



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
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Black-Billed Mountain Toucan (*Andigena nigrirostris*)

Stock#: 60715
Map Maker: Hart / Gould
Date: 1870 circa
Place: London
Color: (See Description)
Condition: VG
Size: 14.5 x 22 inches sheet size
Price: SOLD



Description:

An Original Watercolor of Toucans, by one of John Gould's Artists.

A large beautiful mountain toucan occupies the foreground, he is perched on a lichen-covered branch, while leaning forward, grasping a piece of fruit in his beak and manipulating it with his barbed tongue. In the background a large bare branch protrudes from the canopy and another individual is perched atop it, in this case facing away from the viewer, but with his head in profile.

The drawing contains two pencil notes, one probably by Gould or an assistant, the other possibly added later. Upper left: "10 Feathers in Tail not 12". This is in reference to a repeated mistake by the artist (seen also in [our Yellow-billed toucanet drawing](#)) in which he included too many tail feathers and was later



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rebuked for it.

We know from Gould's article in *Annals and Magazine of Natural History* (volume 14, page 183) that in 1874 he had a strong interest in new toucan species. This makes sense as an approximate date for the drawings, too. The article and drawings suggest that around this time Gould may have been reassessing his second *Monograph of the Rhamphastidae*, wishing to update the work yet again. We are aware of at least six finished but unpublished toucan drawings done for Gould around this time (and possibly a seventh described in H. P. Kraus, *The Ninetieth Catalogue*). Six unpublished toucan drawings are mentioned in Henry Sotheran's *Piccadilly Notes*, Number 9, and we have been able to trace six extant drawings. We purchased four of them, another is with the London drawings trade, and the other is at the [University of Kansas in the Sauer Collection \(Gould 1053\)](#). All of this makes for a rather exciting discovery: the final remnants of Gould's unpublished third *Monograph of the Rhamphastidae*.

Provenance

John Gould's estate;

Henry Sotheran's Ltd.;

Item 1872, *Piccadilly Notes*, Number 9, London, 1933. "Six magnificent original water-colour drawings of toucans, unpublished. £5.5s each.";

By repute, Mallett Antiques;

Private English collection;

Private sale, Dreweatts 1759 (2014)

Detailed Condition:

Watercolor and graphite, with touches of gum arabic, on cream wove paper watermarked: "J WHATMAN."
Some small expert mends.