



Figure 6: Red throated Huming Bird [sic]. *Troculis Colubris* [ca.1805-09] (detail) watercolour and graphite on paper, numbered in graphite '142' but not in Abbot's hand, to correspond to his entry in 'Notes on Birds continued', 28.4 × 22.1 cm. Shows *Archilochus colubris* (Linn.) (Ruby-throated Hummingbird) with *Anisostichus capreolata* (L.) Bureau (Cross-Vine). Courtesy Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas.

application of clear colour enabled him to depict individual feathers while creating a realistic sense of plumage. His compositions generally followed the eighteenth-century convention of illustrating a monumental bird on a miniaturised tree stump or branch. At times he added an insect to the composition. In his early watercolours he treated both birds and landscape details much as George Edwards had done in his publications. Meeting Edwards while a young man must have deeply impressed Abbot, because he often used typical Edwards motifs, such as stylised flowers and grasses or barren trees with roots forming patterns in raised sections of soil. He also borrowed many bird poses and, at times, entire compositions rendered in reverse. In other watercolours, however,