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Field Notes on Marshall's Lorilet.—A visit to Iron Range during the "wet" in January 1967 afforded me splendid opportunities to study, at close range, Marshall's Lorilet, *Opopsitta diophthalma marshalli*; so close indeed that the use of binoculars was not always needed.

One species, of the many local figs, *Ficus* spp., was ripe, with the fruit within some fifteen feet from the ground.

These fruits were apparently so irresistible to the lorilets that, rather than speeding away with a screech when an intruder appeared, they merely moved off quietly to nearby cover only to return to the feast as soon as the disturber had passed.

As a result observation within some twenty feet was easy. The close similarity in colouring of both sexes of this lorilet to the larger Red-cheeked Parrot, *Geoffroyus geoffroyi* was remarkable.

This lorilet appeared to me to be not only slightly bigger but also more robust, in build, with a noticeably larger head, than the Blue-faced Lorilet, *Opopsitta diophthalma leadbeateri*.

A. J. Marshall in his account of this lorilet (*Emu* 47) speaks of the screeching voice of the bird when flying at speed, I had no evidence of this for, owing to their determination not to move too far away from the delicious figs, which incidentally were smeared over their faces like small boys eating ice-cream, the birds only uttered a quiet call rather like something rattling in a box. Though usually in pairs what, I assumed, were family parties of four or five were also seen.—H. R. OFFICER, "Duneira", Olinda, Vic.

Sydney Records of the Pectoral Sandpiper—*Erolia melanotos*.—Occurrences of the Pectoral Sandpiper, *Erolia melanotos*, in New South Wales are unusual enough to make several observations of the species at Botany Bay, Sydney, worthy of placing on record.

The old Cook's River estuary, where the birds were found, consists of an open muddy beach, cut off from the bay itself by several low sand spits. It attracts, during the spring and summer months, flocks of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, *Erolia acuminata*, and many other species of waders.

When first seen, on February 27, 1965, the Pectoral Sandpiper was associating with a flock of these Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, and this proved to be the case on every occasion on which the bird was seen. The flocks of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers with which it mingled ranged in size from approximately forty, to over one hundred and twenty individuals.

The bird was seen during the morning and afternoon of February 27, and during the afternoon of February 28, 1965—when Messrs Hindwood, Hoskin and McGill viewed the bird for some time, and Mr McGill succeeded in obtaining a rather distant photograph of the bird as it fed on an exposed mud bank in the area. It was also seen (possibly the same bird) on March 28, 1965, and from that date was not met with again until almost a year later, when one bird was present in the same area on March 13, 1966.

On all occasions the birds allowed a close enough approach to enable the features to be distinguished without difficulty. In the field, the main differences between this bird and the very similar Sharp-tailed Sandpiper are: the heavily streaked breast, abruptly cut off from the white abdomen; the bright yellow basal third of the bill, the orange-yellow legs and the generally richer brown colour of the upper parts, without the rufous crown. Other points of difference between the two species were: the apparent lack of any wing bar contrasting with the noticeable white bar displayed by the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper in flight, and the Pectoral's habit of stretching up its neck when alarmed.

The "Handbook of British Birds" by Witherby, Jourdain, Ticehurst and Tucker—quoting A. C. Bent, states that, on passage, the Pectoral Sandpiper is "... seldom seen on sandy flats or beaches, but frequents the wet fresh or salt meadows, ... and margins of marshy creeks." This is substantiated by the majority of Australian records of the species, e.g., F. T. H. Smith, *Australian Bird Watcher* 2: 12, and J. N. Hobbs, *Emu* 58: 56.

It is therefore unusual that all the above birds were seen resting and feeding on the open estuary, especially as there are swampy localities available in the nearby Eastlakes area.—B. A. SPEECHLEY, 12 Edgehill Avenue, Botany.