

Tasmanian Museum and Mr. J. D. MacDonald of the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) for identification of the skin. Mr. F. T. H. Smith, who was the first to correctly identify the sandpiper, also generously supplied comments and references, and Mr. D. G. Thomas who gave great assistance with identification and the preparation of the paper, allowed me to quote from a reference sent to him by Mr. S. Marchant and also supplied other references.

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The Fairy Martin—a new bird for New Guinea.—Hitherto the Fairy Martin, *Petrochelidon ariel*, has not been recorded from New Guinea, although it is a well-known wintering migrant to tropical Australia. Conversely, the closely related Tree Martin, *P. nigricans*, is a well-known migrant to New Guinea, sometimes being found in quite large flocks, often feeding with Swiftlets, *Collocalia* spp., and the Pacific Swallow, *Hirundo tahitica*. These flocks are often closely scrutinized by local observers in the hope of detecting the Fairy Martin.

On May 10, 1967, a small flock of Tree Martins, 5 birds, frequented the airstrip at Nomad River Patrol Post, east of the Strickland River in the Western District of Papua. The airstrip is the one cleared area in a vast lowland rain forest. The flock remained for 5 days, hawking low over the grassed tarmac and often perching on the ground. Among these birds, and obviously associating with them, was a lone Fairy Martin. It was often seen, quite close and sometimes on the ground, enabling the rufous cap and spotted blue-black back to be clearly observed.

It seems unlikely that the Fairy Martin is a regular migrant to New Guinea, otherwise it would surely have been collected by one of the Museum expeditions to south New Guinea. More likely this bird was probably swept up in a migratory flock of the closely related *P. nigricans*. In this regard it is possible that the odd specimens of the Welcome Swallow, *Hirundo neoxena*, reach New Guinea on occasions and are mistaken for either *H. tahitica* or the Northern Hemisphere wintering migrant *H. rustica*.—H. L. BELL, 1st Battalion Pacific Island Regiment, Taurama Barracks, Port Moresby, Papua.