

## **Plovers**

### **Lesser sand plover / *Charadrius mongolus* / Medai-chidori / メダイチドリ**

The lesser sand plover (18 to 21 centimeters long), like most small plovers, has a long beak and long legs meant for feeding on beaches, tidal flats, and wetlands. It has a brown body and wings and a bright-orange neck and chest. It migrates in flocks in spring and fall, wintering on Amami-Oshima. The birds feed on insects, shellfish, and worms. Unlike other waders, they do not probe the ground, but hunt by sight using a unique run-and-pause technique.

### **Pacific golden plover / *Pluvialis fulva* / Munaguro / ムナグロ**

These migratory birds winter on Amami-Oshima, where they can be seen in loose flocks in coastal areas. They are the most common medium-sized plover in Japan (23 to 26 centimeters long), with a small head, gold-spangled feathers, and a large wingspan that helps them fly long distances. Pacific golden plovers are known for their migration habits; some travel 12,000 kilometers south from their Arctic breeding grounds. The chest is black during mating season, but turns to a light tan during the winter. The birds feed on insects, shellfish, and reptiles, as well as seeds and berries.