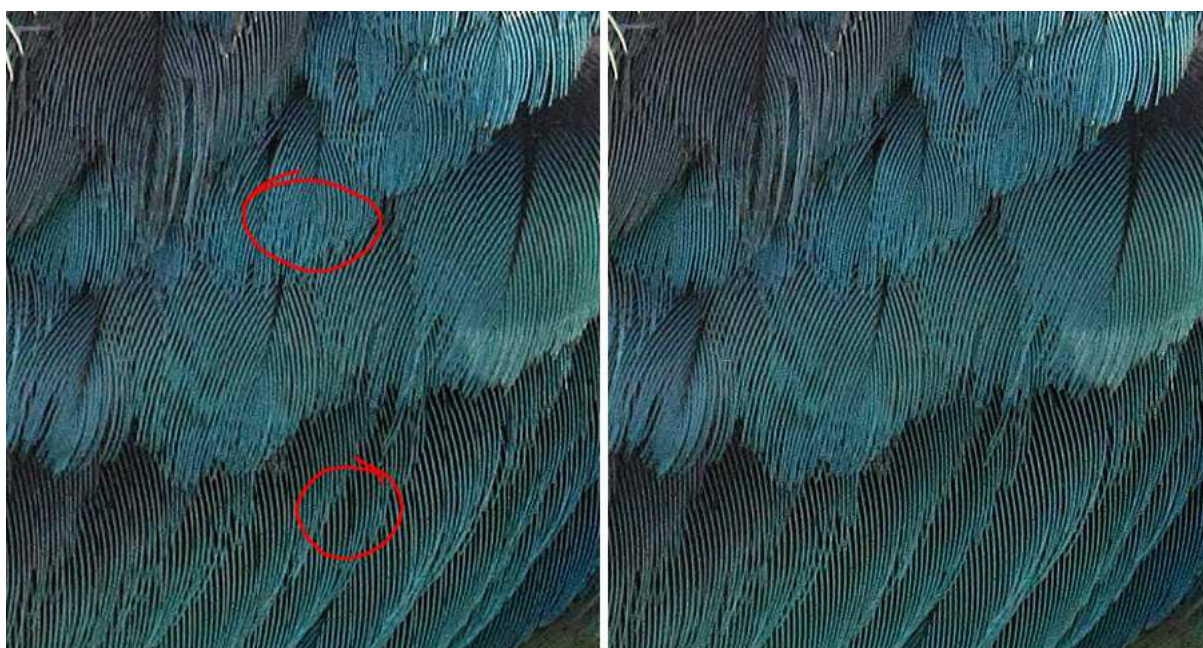# Tip: Zoom Setting When Editing and Viewing Images – Glenn Pure

When doing the final editing steps on your images for uploading to the BLP website, it's important to do so while you are viewing the image at the same zoom setting it will appear on the website. By default, this setting is 100% - that is, each pixel in your image will display as one pixel on the viewer's screen. This setting gives the sharpest and clearest rendering of your image.

Why does this matter? If you view and edit your images at some other zoom setting after they have been set to their final size for uploading, a number of different artefacts will appear. In addition to some loss of sharpness (upper circled item in the example image), some fine details can disappear and reappear as if by magic (lower circled item, where the barb or filament running off the main feather shaft starts to disappear part way along its length then reappears – many other examples of the same can be seen in the example image). While loss of sharpness is minor in the example image, it will generally get worse the further the zoom diverges from 100%.

Feather detail from an immature Red-rumped Parrot. The left panel is a screen shot of the image viewed at 95% zoom while the right panel is at 100% (1:1).
[Editor's Note: original image available with this newsletter on our website.]

A final editing step before uploading is typically to sharpen the image. This step is usually critical to get a satisfactory result but you won't be able to get a reliable idea of the appropriate amount of sharpening needed unless you view the image at 100% zoom. Fortunately, the preview window that will typically pop up when the sharpening tool opens will show a 100% view but it's also a good idea to view the original image at 100% zoom so the results can be reliably assessed after you are done.

How do you go about viewing an image at 100%? That can vary a little depending on the software you are using. For example, on my version of Photoshop Elements (version 9), go to the 'View' menu and click on 'Actual pixels'.

Finally, when looking at your own and others images on the BLP website, they should also be viewed at 100% zoom so you can see them at their best. Fortunately, the BLP website is set up so this will normally be the way an image is displayed when opened. Of course, if you use the zoom function in your web browser, that will no longer be true and whatever images you are looking at will likely suffer as a result.