

Watola, G. 2011. The Discovery of New Zealand's Birds. (3rd Edition in prep.)  
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Lesser sand plover: p 126.

**Lesser Sand Plover** *Charadrius mongolus* Pallas 1776, Migrant  
24/1/1961 Farewell Spit, Nelson  
1968 Norfolk Island

The Lesser Sand Plover has five subspecies, usually grouped into two groups: *mongolus* and *atrifrons*. Both groups occur in New Zealand (Parrish 2000).

R.B. Sibson was sure that a plover seen at the Firth of Thames on 25/11/45 was this species. H.R. McKenzie reported two sand-plovers from Ruakaka that he thought were this species later that summer, but subsequently changed his mind and identified them as Oriental Plover.

The first acceptable record was one found by M.J. Hogg, aged 16 years, on a field-course at Farewell Spit in January 1961 (Bull et al. 1961). The first visit to this area by a party of birders since 1946, this trip produced some good birds. Other rarities found included White-capped Noddy, Little Whimbrel, Pomarine Skua, Grey Plover, and Curlew Sandpiper. Even en route, D.H. Braithwaite had what was then only the second-ever record of Grey Plover in New Zealand.

M. J. Hogg found a puzzling dotterel while alone on a wader census on Farewell Spit. A small grey and white plover, with a striking similarity to a small New Zealand Dotterel, it immediately aroused his suspicions. The dotterel's "back and upperparts were of a uniform gray, very faintly tinged with rufous. The bill was black with a rather bulbous tip, and longer and thicker than a Banded Dotterel". It clearly called "trik" as it flew off. Hogg mentioned it to his companions later. In the leisurely manner typical of the Kiwi rarity-hunter, the area was revisited two days later. Luckily, the bird was still there, and a description and a rather nice drawing (by D. H. Braithwaite) was made of the dotterel.