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Birds of New Zealand - Locality Guide. 3rd edn.

Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.

Black-fronted dotterel: pp 154-156.



BLACK-FRONTED DOTTEREL.

Family Charadriidae

Species *Charadrius melanops*

Common name Black-fronted Dotterel

Status Native

Abundance Common

Size 170 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm, Banded Dotterel 200 mm)

Habitat Generally a bird of inland rivers, although individuals turn up at coastal estuaries and mudflats from time to time.

Worldwide range An Australian species which has established itself in New Zealand since the 1950s. It was first discovered breeding in the Hawkes Bay district from where it has now spread.

New Zealand range In the North Island found from the Bay of Plenty south to Hawkes Bay, and through the Manawatu Gorge into the riverbeds of the Manawatu, Pohangina and Rangitikei Rivers. In the South Island it is found along

the eastern side of the Southern Alps from Marlborough to Southland.

Description

Crown Mottled light brown. **Forehead and face** A black bar passes from the bill through the eye, to back of head. Eyebrow is white. **Upperparts** Light brown, mottled with darker tonings. **Chin and throat** White, beneath which is a black V-shaped black band extending to back of neck. **Underparts** White. **Bill** Red with black tip. **Legs** Dull pink.

Conspicuous features

- Colourful with contrasting colours of black and white.
- Black forehead and white eyebrow.
- Deep black V breast-band beneath white throat.

Conspicuous characteristics

- Blends in with the river stones.
- Always found feeding close to water.
- Flight is jerky and dipping.

Call A fast clicking “tik-tik-tik-tik”.

Nest A scrape on sand or among river pebbles lined with fine grass. Up to 3 eggs, khaki in colour and marked with brown spots and lines, are laid.

Where to find – North Island

Auckland – The causeway at the Mangere sewage ponds. P. 298.

Bay of Plenty – Matata lagoon. P. 320.

Hawkes Bay – Tuki Tuki River upstream from the Tuki Tuki bridge. P. 332.

Manawatu – Palmerston North at the south end of Fitzherbert Ave. P. 336.

Where to find – South Island

Otago – Hoopers Lagoon on Otago Peninsula. P. 360.

Southland – Oreti River in the area of Branxholme just north of Invercargill. P. 366.

Southland – Aparima River from Otautau to Wreys Bush where the road touches the river. P. 367.