

CHAMBERS, S. 2009.

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

Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.

Shore plover: pp 158-160.



SHORE PLOVER

Family Charadriidae

Species *Thinornis novaeseelandiae*

Common name Shore Plover

Status Endemic

Abundance Rare

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

Habitat Originally found throughout New Zealand around the coastline on sandy beaches, rocky shelves and in river-mouth estuaries.

New Zealand range Now confined to South-east Island in the Chatham Islands group, and to Portland Island off the Mahia Peninsula in Hawke Bay and Mana Island off the Kapiti coast where they have been released.

Discussion A rare endemic plover considered a close relation of the Black-fronted Dotterel (*Charadrius melanops*) and the Ringed Plover (*C. hiaticula*). The Shore

Plover has an ancient New Zealand history illustrated by the fact that it has adapted to the old predator-free New Zealand environment becoming larger than its relatives, slower breeding, with smaller clutch sizes and becoming tame and confiding (Fleming 1982). Has been successfully reared in captivity.

Description – male

Crown Above a white head-ring, greyish-brown. **Face and neck** Black from above eye to throat. **Upperparts** Greyish-brown flecked with black. **Underparts** White. **Bill** Red tipped with black. **Legs** Orange.

Description – female

Overall appearance Paler than the male bird.

Call A high-pitched “peep peep”.

Nest Usually hidden on the ground under vegetation. Up to 3 buff, brown-blotched eggs are laid.

Conspicuous characteristic

- Runs with short, fast steps before pausing.

Territorial habits A sedentary species which stays on its same area of beach or rock shelf throughout the year. Translocated birds though have a tendency to wander.

Where to find – North Island

Portland Island, Hawkes Bay – Visits here would have to be arranged through the Department of Conservation at Napier. These birds are known to leave the island and visit the shores of the nearby Mahia Peninsula and also in the greater Hawke Bay coastal vicinity. It would pay to look at beaches in the area closely. P. 330.

Mana Island, Kapiti Coast – Visits here would have to be arranged through the Department of Conservation at Wellington. These birds are known to sometimes leave the island and visit nearby Titahi Bay and Green Point to the south of it. Again all beaches in the vicinity north to Waikanae are worth looking at closely. P. 339.

Where to find – coastal New Zealand

South-east Island, (Rangitira Islands) Chatham Islands – It is found only on the one island in the Chatham group. Permission to get on to this island is difficult to obtain mainly because this island is also the main habitat of the endangered Black Robin.

Captive birds can be viewed at –

- Otorohanga Zoological Society, Otorohanga. P. 312.
- National Wildlife Centre near Masterton. P. 333.
- Te Anau Wildlife Centre near Te Anau. P. 369.