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

Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.

Siberian tattler: pp 180-181.



#### **SIBERIAN TATTLER.**

**Family** Scolopacidae

**Species** *Tringa brevipes*

**Common names** Siberian Tattler, Grey-tailed Tattler

**Status** Migrant

**Abundance** Rare

**Size** 250 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm, Wandering Tattler 270 mm)

**Habitat** Found on muddy estuaries and sandspits.

**Worldwide range** Breeds in eastern Siberia and migrates down the western Pacific rim to winter in countries such as The Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Australia. Odd birds eventually find New Zealand.

**New Zealand range** Can be expected from places where shorebirds gather.

These include Manukau Harbour, the Firth of Thames at Miranda, Tauranga Harbour, Manawatu Estuary, Waikanae Estuary, Lake Ellesmere, Papanui Inlet, Hoopers Inlet, Fortrose Estuary, Waituna Lagoon and Awarua Bay.

### **Description – non-breeding**

**Head** Grey with white eyebrow and a dark stripe beneath eye. **Upperparts** Smooth grey. **Chin** White. **Underparts** Grey breast with white abdomen. **Sides and flanks** Some light horizontal barring. **Tail** Grey with some white indistinct cross-barring. **Bill** Black heavy in structure. **Legs** Yellow.

### **Description – breeding**

**Upperparts** Smooth grey. **Underparts** Heavily barred dark grey with white undertail.

### **Conspicuous features**

- Long and heavy bill.
- Has a squat posture which is heavier than most shorebirds.
- Yellow legs.

### **Conspicuous characteristics**

- At the high-tide usually roosts close to the mud-line.
- When alerted bobs head and dips tail.
- Is easily alerted and put to flight.
- Usually a solitary species.

**Call** A “two-eet two-eet” the second note being a higher pitch than the first.

## **From P. 179**

### **Differences between Siberian and Wandering Tattlers**

- Very hard to separate if you can't hear the song.
- Wandering Tattlers are bigger than Siberian Tattlers.
- In the hand the length of the nasal groove can be seen to be slightly longer in the Wandering Tattler.
- In breeding plumage the Wandering Tattler has undertail barring and barring on the abdomen and lower breast. The Siberian Tattler has indistinct barring undertail and lighter barring on breast and abdomen. Birds seen in New Zealand usually show only traces of barring.
- The Wandering Tattler has a very narrow white eye-stripe behind the eye and less white in front of the eye than the bolder stripe of the Siberian Tattler.
- The Wandering Tattler has longer wings, making its tail appear shorter.
- The Wandering Tattler is an overall darker bird.
- The Wandering Tattler has a distinctive call, a trill of “tew tew tew tew tew teeew” notes which differ greatly from the less musical Siberian Tattler whose call is a two syllable “two-eet two-eet”, the second note

being of higher pitch than the first.

### **Where to find – North Island**

**North Auckland** – Kaipara Harbour at Manukapua Island. P. 287.

**South Auckland** – Miranda at the “Stilt Ponds”. P. 302.

**Bay of Plenty** – Matata lagoons. P. 320.

**Manawatu** – Foxton Estuary. P. 336.

**Wellington** – Waikanae Estuary. P. 339.

### **Where to find – South Island**

**Southland** – Waituna Lagoon and Awarua Bay. P. 364.