

bird was liberated after capture, but no particulars are available regarding its plumage, etc. However, the bird from Eaglehawk Neck was sent to the Tasmanian Museum, Hobart. Dr. J. Pearson, Director, has kindly sent us (August, 1944) this specimen for examination. It is an example of *Eudypetes pachyrhynchus* in adult plumage. Details of the specimen are: No. 7172/B.2448, Tasmanian Museum, Hobart, collected at Eaglehawk Neck, Tasmania, July, 1944, by W. H. Clemes. Bill 'strong orange'; claws 'black'; feet and tarsi 'pink'; webs 'blackish'; iris 'orange-brown'; culmen 51 mm.; depth of bill, 25 mm.; flipper, 195 mm.; sex not determined.

There are a number of definite records of *E. pachyrhynchus* reaching Tasmania and parts of coastal south-eastern Australia. By a strange coincidence the first specimen to be taken in Tasmania was collected when Furneaux, in the *Adventure*, visited Adventure Bay in February, 1773, during Cook's second voyage. A pencil sketch of this bird, made by J. G. A. Forster, who was on board the *Resolution*, which ship did not call at Tasmania, is now in the British Museum (Forster Drawing, no. 80). J. R. Forster, his father, later united all the then known crested penguins under the name *chrysocome*. This name, based on a composite description of three species, has been discarded.—K. A. HINDWOOD and M. S. R. SHARLAND, Sydney, 11/8/44.

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## Breeding of Double-banded Dotterel

By R. H. D. STIDOLPH, Masterton, New Zealand

Recent references in *The Emu* to large clutches of plovers' eggs (vol. 42, page 164 and vol. 43, page 95) have induced me to place on record some unusual clutches of eggs of the Double-banded Dotterel (*Charadrius bicinctus*), the clutches in question being two of four eggs and one of six. An interesting feature is that these records occurred in three successive years and all the nests were within a chain of each other. Although I hesitate to make claims with unmarked birds, I think the circumstantial evidence in this case is so overwhelming that it indicates quite conclusively that this species, all being well, returns to the same breeding area year after year.

In the first place it is necessary to state that normally the clutch is sometimes two and usually three and, as far as I know, four eggs have never before been recorded for the Double-banded Dotterel, let alone six.

The first of these remarkable clutches was recorded on

the bed of the Ruamahanga river on August 20, 1939, when a nest with four eggs was found. All of these eggs hatched. In the following year (1940), on August 25, three nests of this bird were found in the same area, one of which contained four eggs. This nest was within a chain of the previous year's nest. On September 1 I re-visited the area with Mr. T. Cockcroft, now of Napier, to show him the four-egg clutch, but found, to my amazement, the nest contained six eggs. Judging by the size, colour and markings of the eggs, they were all laid by the same female. The eggs were lying neatly in two rows. Unfortunately, heavy rain and a flooded river early in September were responsible, I believe, for the desertion of the nest. In 1941 the first nest found, on September 7, again in the same area, was one containing four eggs and this nest, also, was within a chain of the first and second with abnormal clutches.

In view of the evidence, this particular female, identifiable by its large clutches (the eggs every year were similar in appearance), returned for at least three successive years to the same area of river-bed for the breeding season. This species, it should be remembered, leaves the river-beds about January and returns in July. One or two odd birds may be seen on the rivers on rare occasions and fair-sized flocks (100 to 200) are occasionally seen on fallow land or similar country in the intervening months. I cannot say whether these flocks are local birds or visitors from other districts.

Perhaps it may be as well to add a few general observations on the breeding of the Double-banded Dotterel in this district. At least some of the birds appear to be mated when they arrive on their breeding areas in July. I have seen aggressiveness on the part of a male as early as July 2. Scrapes have been found in the last week of July. On the breeding area, two acres, in which the above records were made, at least five and probably six pairs of Dotterels bred each year in 1939, 1940 and 1941. Occupied nests have been found about a chain apart. The species breeds on several shingle river-beds of this district.

In this area I have recorded four nests with two eggs each, fifteen with three eggs each, two with four and one with six eggs. Seven nests have been found in August, eight in September, six in October, four in November and one in December. The earliest recorded date is August 13 (two eggs) and the latest date is December 7 (two eggs). The other two-egg clutches were found on August 27 and November 17.

The Double-banded Dotterel in New Zealand is a totally-protected species and the Government refuses to issue permits for the taking of eggs or birds.



Four egg clutch, showing type of river-bed favoured for nests. Eggs in exact centre of picture.



Six egg clutch.