

as well as reports from more trapping stations separated by increasingly long distances to note the movements of flocks, and it is hoped that this will be done in the future.

REFERENCES

- Fleming, C. A. 1943. 'Notes on the Life History of the Silvereye based on Colour-banding.' *Emu*, April 1943, vol. 42, 4.
Marples, B. J. 1944. 'Report on Trapping Work on the White-eye, *Z. lateralis*, through the Dominion.' *N.Z. Bird Notes*, April 1944, vol. 1, no. 5. (Bulletin of the Ornithological Soc. of N.Z.)
Moncrieff, Mrs. P. 1929. 'Bird Migration in New Zealand.' *Emu*, April 1929, vol. 28.
N.Z. Bird Notes, December 1944, vol. 1, no. 7. (Summarized Classified Notes.)
Stead, E. F. 1932. *The Life Histories of New Zealand Birds*.

On the Occurrence of Geoffroy's Sand-Plover in New Zealand

By R. B. SIBSON and Lieut. P. C. BULL

On August 20, 1943, one of us (P. C. Bull) found, in a corner of Manukau Harbour, which we have been systematically watching for some years, a wader that he did not know. It was with a flock of Wrybills (*Anarhynchus frontalis*) which frequent that area every winter (see *The Emu*, vol. 43, pt. 1) and was clearly one of the Charadriidae, but it was equally clearly not a bird on the New Zealand list, nor was it one of the small plovers or dotterels with which Bull had become familiar in south-eastern Australia. Its colouring was in no way remarkable. It was about the size of a Wrybill. Its most salient features were its bill, which seemed disproportionately large, and its eye, which a dark mark on the cheek made to appear perhaps larger than it actually was. It was heard to utter a distinctive note.

On September 5 we were lucky enough to find the bird again, and although cold, boisterous weather made observation difficult, we were able to examine it at length from less than twenty yards. It was still with the Wrybills; but, though their tameness in the presence of human beings evidently gave it some confidence, it was uneasy, and while they stayed quiet, it ran rapidly to and fro on the shell beach, or paused, bobbing its head nervously in the manner common to many waders. In addition to the characteristics mentioned before, a faint suffusion was visible on the sides of the breast where a collar might develop. But its heavy bill and big eye were its most striking features. It looked, in fact, like a rather big Banded Dotterel (*Charadrius bicinctus*) in winter plumage with the bill of a Red-breasted Dotterel (*Pluviorhynchus obscurus*). Its upper surface

was brownish grey, the brown element being shown up by contrast with the cleaner grey of the Wrybills, now in breeding plumage. Its under-parts were white. As it flew slowly around, showing a distinct whitish wing-bar, it confirmed our impression of a bird a little larger than a Banded Dotterel, but considerably smaller than a Red-breasted Dotterel. In September, of course, both these species would be in full breeding plumage. The time of arrival and the lack of colour in the plumage probably indicate that the bird was a juvenal.

By a process of elimination there seemed to be only one possibility for the identity of this small plover—*Charadrius leschenaulti*. Fortunately, a skin from Ceylon was available in the Auckland Museum. Kuroda's *Birds in Life Colours* proved most useful, and the *Ibis* (1870) contains a good account of the species by Harting. His description tallies exactly with the bird we saw. After enumerating the characteristics which had been noted by us, he adds that in winter the only trace of the ferruginous collar is a dusky hair-brown spot on each side of the breast; and the young has, in lieu of the pectoral band, a buff spot on each side of the breast.

For purposes of comparison we give measurements of this Asiatic dotterel and of the small New Zealand plovers—

	Wing	Bill	Tarsus
Wrybill	122 mm.	30 mm.	30 mm.
Banded Dotterel	125	18	30 (Oliver)
Red-breasted Dotterel	165	29	36 (Oliver)
Geoffroy's Sand-Plover	132-144	22.5-26	34-38.5 (Kuroda)

Harting and Peters give Geoffroy's Sand-Plover a tremendous winter range, including South Africa, Madagascar, India, Moluccas, Australia and the Solomons; so that there is nothing inherently impossible in a straggler's occasionally reaching New Zealand. At the time of writing Bull is back in New Zealand from the Solomons, where he has become familiar with *Charadrius leschenaulti* in various phases of plumage.

We have no doubt that, on the strength of the bird which we saw in Manukau Harbour, the species should now be added to the New Zealand list.

Silver Gull at Wallangarra.—Unusual observation at Wallangarra, New England Range, South Queensland, was a Silver Gull (*Larus novæ-hollandiæ*) which flew at low altitude over the town. I have been informed that Silver Gulls have been observed before, flying over this mountainous district. Wallangarra is approximately 3,000 feet above sea-level and ninety miles inland from the coast.—
LAWRENCE C. HAINES, Sydney, N.S.W., 25/7/45.