

SHORT NOTES

PIED AND BLACK FANTAILS

Inspired by John L. Craig's article (1972), and with a clear personal recollection of the Black Fantail well known in the South Island, we decided to make a count in the course of a nine-day tour through the North Island in May 1972. Our route took us from Hawkes Bay through the Manawatu Gorge, Wanganui, New Plymouth, Waitomo and Taupo and we counted 81 positive sightings of fantails — all pied.

This seems to confirm that Black Fantails are rare in the North Island but it doesn't prove that there aren't any.

REFERENCE

CRAIG, J. L. 1972. Investigation of the mechanism maintaining polymorphism in the New Zealand Fantail, *Rhipidura fuliginosa* (Sparrman). *Notornis* 19 (1): 42-54, 6 tables.

JOHN and MARY McFADZIEN

P.O. Box 157,
Havelock North

★

MONGOLIAN DOTTEREL AT MANGERE

On 16 April 1972, Mrs H. Hagen and I observed an unusual dotterel at Mangere pools. There were about 30 Wrybill in the vicinity but none very close to the dotterel which was feeding in the mud and running short distances in typical dotterel manner. We separated, Mrs Hagen making a detour round the bird in order to drive it closer to me; it soon became apparent that it was unable to fly although it could run fast and swim well. After some manoeuvring we managed to catch it; no injuries were apparent. Measurements of bill, wing and tarsus were taken, also notes on plumage. Outstanding features were its large black eye, longish legs and faint, broad, smudgy breast band. Comparison later with skins in the Auckland Museum proved it to be a Mongolian Dotterel (*Charadrius mongolus*). Another visit to the same area was made a week later but the dotterel had disappeared.

SYLVIA M. REED

4 Mamaku Street,
Meadowbank,
Auckland 5.