

Scrub-bird extends to the upper region of the Hunter River, and the Log-runner out-distances them all by reappearing (after a break of many miles) on the New South Wales south coast.

Perhaps the most curious of all these cases is that of the Lyrebird. Although its food-tastes (and nesting arrangements) are similar to those of the Pitta, the latter has a north/south range of about 2,000 miles, whereas that of the Lyrebird, including the break between the Mistake Range and the Blackall Range, is less than 200 miles. Indeed, the Albert Lyrebird is geographically one of the most restricted species among all Australian birds, and the wonder is why that should be so. Why, for one thing, does the species not extend into favourable country south of the Richmond? Secondly, why has it not followed the Pitta westward to the Coolabunia and Bunya rain-forests? And, since members of the species found their way into the Blackall Range, why did they not get any farther north? In short, why is the Albert Lyrebird much less enterprising than its larger-tailed relative, the Superb Lyrebird, which has a north/south range (broken where suitable habitat is not available) of about 1,200 miles.

Whatever be the explanation of these puzzles, the fact is that during the present century *M. alberti* has fallen away to some extent, and that not necessarily through any weakness of its own but rather because of the clearing of its habitat. G. M. Mathews remarked in 1919 that the species was "approaching extinction, if this be not already achieved", and J. A. Leach echoed that statement ten years later—he wrote that the bird, "if not already extinct, seems doomed to early extinction". Both of those statements of course, were merely nonsensical, and could have been avoided by a trifle of inquiry. Nevertheless, and although the Albert Lyrebird can still be heard singing freely in various parts (notably the National Park of the McPherson Range), it is clear that close safeguarding is needed to ensure the preservation of the species.

Black-fronted Dotterel in New Zealand.—Mr. D. Brathwaite has twice recorded the Australian Black-fronted Dotterel, *Charadrius melanops* Vieillot, from the North Island of New Zealand (*Notornis* 6, 146, 1955; and 7, 57, 1956).

I can now add a South Island occurrence. In April 1956 at Leithfield, North Canterbury, Mr. Bruce Todd made a movie film, in colour, including parts with an extension lens, of an individual of this species. As it was some time before the remainder of the film was used and developed, I did not see it until recently, and Mr. Todd did not recall the exact day in April when he saw the bird. The film was run through twice, and the identification is certain.—RON J. SCARLETT, Christchurch, N.Z., 14. 11. 56.