

Monitoring of New Zealand dotterel/tūturiwhatu breeding success on Motuihe Island

The Northern New Zealand Dotterel/tūturiwhatu (*Charadrius obscurus aquilonius*) is endemic to New Zealand with an estimated 2,130 individuals remaining. Dotterels are threatened by coastal development and activities, and site management is key to their conservation. Motuihe Island (Hauraki Gulf), pest-free since 2004, was identified as a priority site for dotterel management. Dotterels breed regularly on Motuihe Island but breeding success in recent years seems to be lower than that from earlier records.

This project builds on the work of the volunteer team that worked closely with the Motuihe Island Trust and DOC ranger to monitor dotterels on Motuihe over the 2023-2024 breeding season. This study aims to understand determinants of breeding success and failures to support dotterels on Motuihe Island. To achieve the objectives, fortnightly surveys will be performed throughout the breeding season (August 2024-February 2025) to monitor breeding progress. Where possible, trail cameras will also be set up to evaluate chick shelter utilization and to identify threats to breeding success.

The Projects Assistance Fund granted by Birds New Zealand will go towards transport and equipment costs. This support will greatly facilitate the participation of volunteers from all backgrounds and improve our monitoring capacities to understand these important shorebirds.

