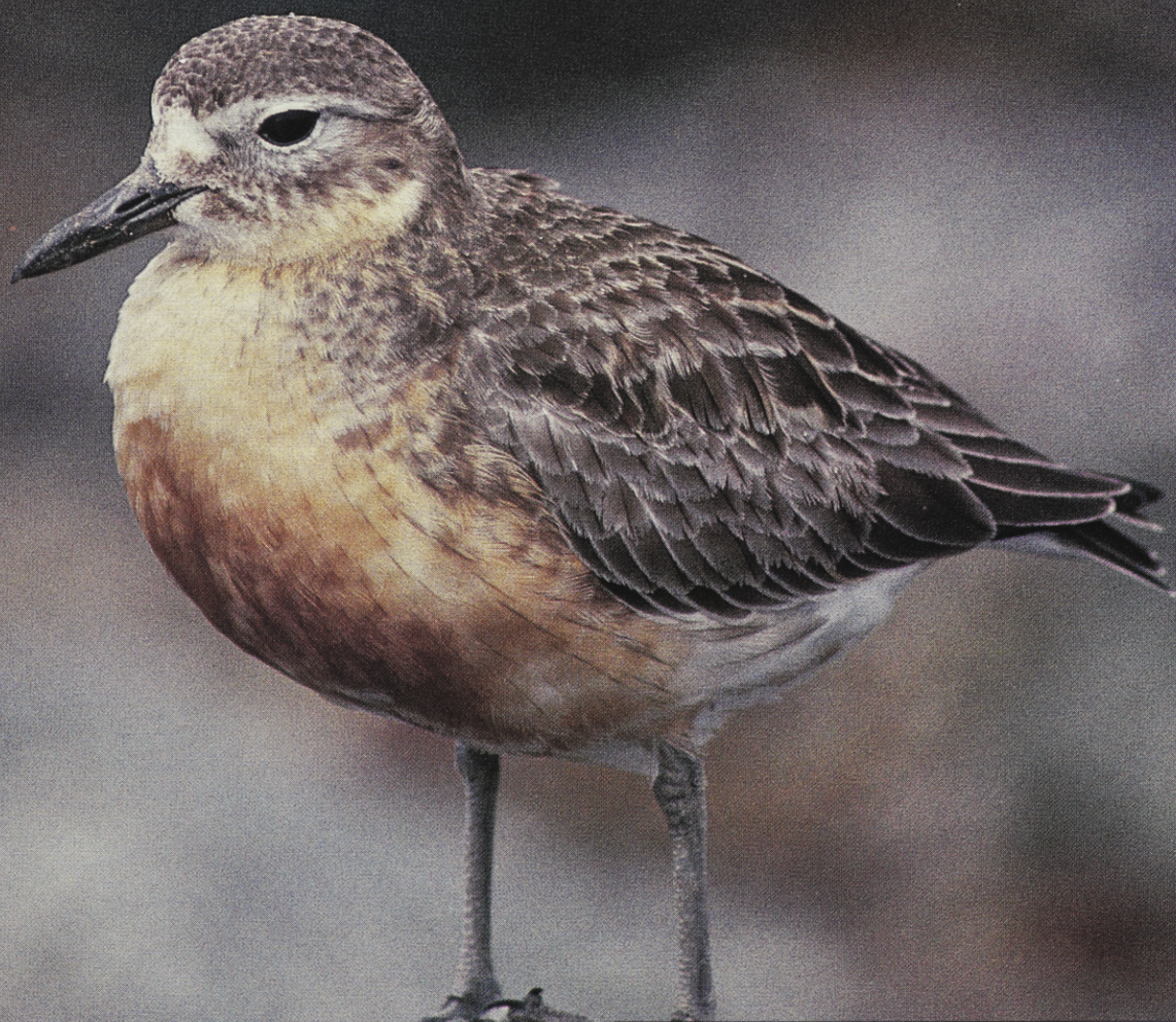


S?



A lone New Zealand dotterel on Mt Rakeahua with the distinctive reddish underparts of breeding plumage. When Dowding's study began in 1988, three pairs were breeding here – now there are none.

North Island today, suggested a healthy population and there was no reason to suspect that it faced any major problems.

During the past 20 years, however, numbers of New Zealand dotterels in Southland each winter have been monitored – by Maida Barlow and others – and have shown a steady downward trend. This decline, and the fact that a complete census of the Stewart Island population had never been undertaken, suggested that a study of the southern New Zealand dotterels was overdue.

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Stewart Island's remaining dotterels gather in three flocks. One flock actually winters on the South Island at Awarua Bay, a second commutes between Mason Bay and The Neck, and the third is at Cooks Arm in the south of the island.

#### STEWART ISLAND

