

Why Teach About Shorebirds?

With all the curricula that already exist on specialized topics, the natural question arises, why should teachers use this one? While at first glance the focus appears to be on shorebirds only, a closer look reveals that these lessons teach a broad range of scientific concepts and offer a global connection to other students, scientists, and educators. Consider what makes this program unique.

Shorebirds Are a Theme Easily Integrated into Many Subjects!

- The sheer magnitude of what shorebirds accomplish in their efforts to survive is truly amazing and a great tie in to numerous subjects. For example, Hawaii has a rich culture that incorporates its most well-known shorebird, the Kōlea or Pacific-Golden Plover, into its chants, hulas, and folklore. The Kōlea provides a great opportunity to teach about science, but it also brings in history and social studies.
- Calculating distances and mapping where these birds migrate also make great opportunities for bringing math and geography into the classroom in a relevant and fun way.

Curriculum Activities Are Correlated with National Education Standards!

- This provides justification to your school administrators for your time in the classroom and field trip expenses.

Shorebirds Are a Hook for Habitat Conservation!

- By learning about and protecting shorebirds, you are protecting an entire ecosystem and all flora and fauna that depend on these important natural areas.

Shorebirds Are Found Throughout North America!

- Because of the migratory nature of shorebirds, at some time during the year, shorebirds can be seen in all 50 United States, allowing many people to participate in this program.

Shorebirds Connect Us Internationally!

- Shorebirds are among the longest distance migrants of the bird world.
- The Shorebird Sister Schools Program (SSSP) can connect your field site and education program to many different countries and cultures through the E-mail Network, Web site, and pen pal components of the program.
- Geography, history, foreign language and culture are incorporated into what first appears to be a science program.

It Is Easy to Schedule Field Trips!

- Shorebirds migrate in huge flocks and stop at the same places at relatively predictable times of the year. This allows for advanced planning of educational events, festivals, and field trips.
- School children along the flyways can actively observe and report on the migration of shorebirds through their communities to the Shorebird Sister Schools Web site.

Shorebirds Are Fun to Watch!

- The sheer number, variety, and behaviors of shorebirds make them an intriguing, observable species to teach and learn about.

Shorebirds Need Your Help!

- Shorebirds can tell us a lot about the overall health of the habitats in which they live. They are also part of our earth's incredible biodiversity. Scientists fear that many shorebird populations are declining largely due to the loss of habitat and pollution. To protect shorebirds and their habitat means to protect the very environment we all depend on.