



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

Do you want to help protect Endangered Species?

Want to see your artwork on a beach sign?

Enter the 1st Annual:

BEACH BIRDS Youth Art Contest

*Open to Youth: Grades K - 12

*Winners from 5 age groups get:

- Artwork on Beach Sign
- Prizes

***Grand Prize:**

Be a Plover Biologist for a Day!

*All entries will be featured on the
Refuge website!

piping plover



© Joann Schumacher/VIREO

least tern



USFWS photo

red knots



wildbirdsunlimited.typepad.com

ENTER BY: MAY 1ST, 2018

Contest winners to be announced during the Endangered Species Day
festivities on **May 19th, 2018**

For full contest guidelines, visit https://www.fws.gov/refuge/parker_river/
or email katlyn_hojnacki@fws.gov

2018 Beach Birds Youth Art Contest Guidelines

Parker River National Wildlife Refuge is calling on all youth to help spread the word about the importance of beaches to shorebirds by entering the Refuge's 1st Annual Beach Birds Youth Art Contest. Winning artwork from each age category will be used on Refuge signs to educate beachgoers.

Every year, an average of 250,000 visitors use Parker River NWR's beaches, walking trails, and salt marshes for a variety of outdoor recreational activities, such as fishing, birding, and overall beach-going. Shorebirds, otherwise known as a specific group of birds that use areas with water, are also frequent visitors of the Refuge. While people are enjoying Parker River's natural, pristine, and beautiful beaches, shorebirds are seeking a safe and sustainable place to breed, feed, and rest on the Refuge year-round. Shorebirds using the critically important beach habitat are vulnerable to disturbance as a result of visitor use.

Artwork Criteria

- 1) Artwork should illustrate one of these 2 themes:
 - A. One of the shorebird species actively using the habitat (e.g. a plover on a nest or with chicks, a group of sandpipers feeding on the beach). See "Shorebirds of Parker River NWR" section for full list of shorebird species to choose from.
 - B. What beachgoers should do to help birds (e.g. respecting closed areas and signs, walking at a distance from birds, picking up trash, etc.). See "Conservation Message" section for more ideas.
- 2) Be creative in content when conveying one of the 2 themes.
- 3) Include a short text reinforcing the conservation message (encouraged, but **not** required).
- 4) Be created on white paper or canvas, size 8.5" x 11" or 11" x 14", with a ¼" border all around.

Submission & Judging

Artwork must be submitted by **May 1st, 2018**. Only artwork originals will be accepted. Label the back with student's name, grade, school, and email contact. Students do not have to be enrolled in a school to participate. Please drop off artwork in person, or send by mail, to Parker River NWR, 6 Plum Island Turnpike, Newburyport, MA 01950.

All entries will be showcased electronically on the Refuge's website!

Each submission will be separated into one of the five groups listed below for judging. One winner from each group will be selected.

Group 1: Kindergarten

Group 2: 1st grade – 3rd grade

Group 3: 4th grade – 5th grade

Group 4: 6th grade – 8th grade

Group 5: 9th grade – 12th grade

The five winners from each group will receive the following prizes:

- Their artwork recreated into signs to be posted on the Refuge beach from April to October
- An annual pass to Parker River NWR
- A Parker River National Wildlife Refuge 75th Anniversary tote
- A plover water bottle

A separate Grand Prize winner will be selected from all contest entries. In addition to the above prizes, s/he and an accompanying guardian will get a chance to help a plover biologist conduct plover surveys and management on the closed Refuge beach.

Conservation Message

The artwork signs will complement existing signs the Refuge uses, and engage a larger community in this outreach campaign. The artwork should feature one of the 7 shorebirds listed below, and are encouraged, but not required, to convey one of the following conservation messages:

- Respect closed areas and symbolic fencing
- Leave your kite in the car - birds see these as predators, like hawks and falcons
- Give feeding and resting shorebirds plenty of room - keep at least 50 feet away
- Pack out trash to avoid attracting predators
- Leave your pets at home
- *A conservation message of your own creation!*

Shorebirds of Parker River NWR

Here at Parker River NWR, many species of shorebird are found using the beach during spring, summer and fall. We have highlighted 7 species to provide background information for the art contest: **piping plover, semipalmated sandpiper, red knot, sanderling, semipalmated plover, least tern, and black-bellied plover**. Students may use the pictures and information on the following pages for reference and inspiration, but are encouraged to do their own research and create their own unique art. If you plan to incorporate the conservation message theme in your art, the “Watch Out” statements are provided for more guidance.



Piping Plover adult and chicks
Status: Federally threatened

Piping plovers, known for their signature “peep” call and cotton ball looking chicks, are one of the most well-known shorebirds. Thanks to strong outreach and beach protection, the population has increased dramatically in Massachusetts, and is close to meeting its recovery goals. In order to do that, we need every beach goer’s help to make sure that every egg and chick has the best chance of becoming an adult.

Watch Out: for signs indicating closed areas or nests nearby. Be aware of eggs and chicks that blend perfectly into the sand.

<https://www.fws.gov/northeast/pipingplover/>



Semipalmated Sandpiper
Status: Almost Threatened

Semipalmated sandpipers breed in Canada and winter in South America, and use the Refuge beach to fuel up for their long flight. They can fly thousands of miles, sometimes flying non-stop for 4 days. When they are at Parker River, they need to fuel up quickly, get plenty of rest and get on their way.

Watch Out: for sandpipers feeding in the wet sand at low tide; or resting in the upper beach, camouflaged in wrack (the beach debris left over by the high tide).

[https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Semipalmated Sandpiper/lifehistory](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Semipalmated_Sandpiper/lifehistory)



Red Knot
Status: Federally Threatened

Called the Moon Bird, the red knot is the one of the longest migrators in the world. They nest in the Arctic and winter in Argentina, flying 20,000 miles in 1 year. One banded red knot (B95) is at least 21 years old, and has flown roughly 239,000 miles, equivalent to flying to the moon and almost back.

Watch Out: for this bird from September into November! Because of their long flights and poor population numbers, give them plenty of room to feed or rest.

<https://www.fws.gov/northeast/redknot/>



Tailsofbirding.blogspot.com

Sanderlings

Status: Common, Least Concern

Sanderlings can often be seen scurrying in and out of the surf, picking up stranded insects or probing for clams and invertebrates after waves have receded. Small flocks will use the Refuge beach throughout the year.

Watch Out: for flocks of sanderlings constantly running in and out of the waves to forage as you play along the ocean's edge.

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Sanderling/lifehistory>



Semipalmated Plover (Alaska) Copyright 2009 Monte M. Taylor

Semipalmated Plover

Status: Common, Least Concern

Unlike the piping plover, semipalmated plovers are very common throughout their range. Even though they do not breed on the Refuge in the summer, our beaches provide important resources for them to feed and rest as they migrate.

Watch Out: for semipalmated plovers hidden amongst mixed flocks of other migrating shorebirds. Large groups of resting plovers blend into the debris washed up by the high tide.

http://animaldiversity.org/accounts/Charadrius_semi_palmatus/



© Alan Tate

Least Tern

Status: MA species of Special Concern

Least Terns are colony nesters. The refuge hosts anywhere from 10 to 100 pairs every summer. Nests are just small, shallow scrapes in the sand, making them difficult to distinguish, even after eggs are laid. Once chicks hatch, adults are often seen diving for and carrying small fish to feed their young.

Watch Out: Least Terns are very defensive during the nesting season. If you come too close to their nests or chicks, adults do not hesitate to dive bomb your head, rarely actually striking, but typically dropping feces.

<http://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/least-tern>



Black-bellied Plover

Status: Common, Least Concern

Black-bellied Plovers are the largest plover in North America and are seen here at Parker River typically during migration. Aside from its striking appearance and size, this species is unique from other American plovers because it is the only one to have an inconspicuous hind toe.

Watch Out: this shorebird is known for being especially cautious and quick to leave a feeding or resting area. Give them extra space to avoid disturbance.

https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Black-bellied_Plover/lifehistory

Parker River National Wildlife Refuge
6 Plum Island Turnpike
Newburyport, MA 01950

For any questions please contact the refuge via **phone: (978) 465-5753**
or **email: katlyn_hojnacki@fws.gov**

