

INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Arctic-Nesting Shorebirds contains information and activities designed to help students develop a variety of academic and life skills while learning about migratory shorebirds, shorebird habitat, and the significance of human interaction with both. Most activities are adaptable for use whether you live near a shorebird breeding or wintering area, migratory stop-over sites, or in a geographic region that hosts birds for a combination of these.

Although the activities are written primarily for grades 2 through 12, some, including field trips, can easily be modified for younger children. "Additional Activities" sections at the end of chapters also include lessons for younger students. Substantial background "General Information" is included on various aspects of shorebird life history. This information is written at adult reading level and intended primarily for supplementary use by middle/high school teachers or students, or for other interested teachers. "Key Words" are listed at the end of each chapter (after "Additional Activities"). These key words are italicized in bold where they appear in the text.

FIELD TRIPS

Timing: The field trip is an ideal focal point for the study of shorebirds. Plan ahead because timing of field trips is very important. You want to ensure that students have the best chance to see some shorebirds! If you are not familiar with the timing of the occurrence of shorebirds in your area, contact a local resource person, or see the Shorebird Sister Schools Program (see page 169) or the Field Trip section (page 175).

Activities: Although a chapter specifically on field trips is included, be sure and skim the entire curriculum before you arrange a trip. Several activities that appear in other chapters can be used with field trips or will be enhanced by directed observations made in the field.

OTHER TIPS BEFORE YOU START

Consider videotaping, or having students videotape, some activities and community participation during the course of your shorebird unit. Videotapes are fun to make and can be very useful for learning by watching one's work or performance. Videos also provide a means of sharing experiences with others in a Parent Night or Fair.

Have your students make, or provide your students with, small notebooks dedicated to their shorebird investigations or activities. Consider investing in waterproof paper. "Rite-in-the-Rain" waterproof notebooks are available in forestry or research supply stores, but may be expensive.

Recruit a team of parents, elders, and government or research specialists to help with your shorebird unit.

Begin a collection of current newspaper and magazine articles on a related theme like habitats, human use of wildlife habitats or resources, threats to habitat, or migratory animals. (Students can help with this collection.) These articles can come in handy for activities with older students that focus on these subjects or skills such as writing, comparison-making, journalism, or careful and critical reading, to name just a few.

Begin the unit by giving an oral or written pre-test on shorebirds. For example, you can give students 5 minutes to do a fast-write on everything they (think they) know about shorebirds. Use this information for directional ideas as well as end-of-unit comparisons.

ARCTIC-NESTING SHOREBIRDS

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