



**You can help! While enjoying the beach, take these simple steps:**

### Respect regulations

- Entry into the upper beach and dune areas during the nesting season (**March 15 – September 15**) when nests and young are most vulnerable is prohibited.
- Do not remove shells, kelp, or driftwood from the beach; they provide nesting and feeding habitat for snowy plovers.
- Dogs, camping, fires and fireworks are prohibited.

### Beach driving

**Vehicles are prohibited** on the Leadbetter Point Unit except during designated Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife razor clamming seasons.

Enter the beach only at designated access points and proceed directly to the hard-packed sand near or below the high tide line. Avoid driving on the upper beach whenever possible, and never drive over any dunes or beach vegetation.

### Keep your distance

Avoid getting too close. If birds become agitated or leave their nests, you are too close!

### Never intentionally force birds to fly

When birds are chased or disturbed, they use energy they need to reserve for nesting and migration.

### Keep pets away from nesting areas

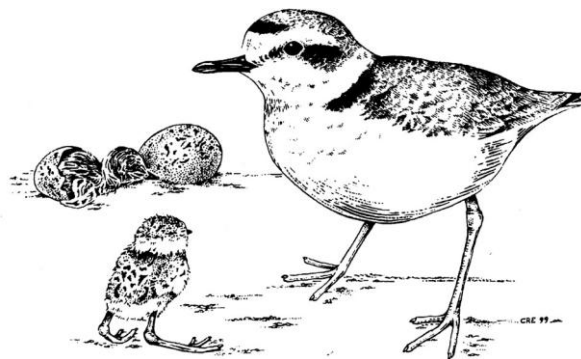
Even well-behaved pets can be perceived as a threat to birds and will disturb them.

### Keep the beach clean

Dispose of garbage properly to avoid attracting predators. Ravens, coyotes, skunks and raccoons are attracted to nesting areas by trash. Do not feed any wildlife.

### Report sightings & spread the word

If you see people disturbing nesting birds, gently remind them how their actions may hurt birds' survival. If they continue the behavior, please report to 360-484-3482.



Drawing by Carleton Eyster

# Share the Beach *with* Western Snowy Plovers



**Their survival depends on you!**



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
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The **western snowy plover** is a small shorebird about 6 inches long, with a thin dark bill, and a light-colored body with dark patches on either side of the neck, behind the eye, and on the forehead.

Western snowy plovers are classified as a threatened species because their numbers have declined due to habitat loss, human disturbance, and increasing threats from predators.

They can be found year-round at Leadbetter Point on the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge and are part of the Pacific coast population which breed from Washington State to Baja Mexico.



Beginning in March, adults build their nests in the upper beach and dune areas on dry sand. Their nests are a small depression in the sand called a "scrape." The nest is extremely camouflaged, which is its only defense against predators.



Eggs are incubated for about a month when tiny snowy plovers emerge. The eggs and young are extremely vulnerable to disturbance and predation due to their placement out in the open. Their camouflage makes them easy targets for inadvertently being stepped on or disturbed.



Within 24 hours, the young are able to stand up, run, and attempt to feed themselves. They then leave the nest area and head for the beach or other coastal areas to start eating!

### **Disturbance threatens survival**

When beach-nesting birds are forced to fly or run from their nests, their eggs and chicks are left vulnerable to the elements and to predators. Disturbances that cause birds to take flight or leave their young may threaten their survival.



Photos by USFWS

### **Each nest is critical**

Populations of beach-nesting birds are declining. The fate of each delicate nest is critical to the survival of these birds. By being a responsible beach-user, you can help beach-nesting birds and their young survive.