

ENTERING A PROTECTED HABITAT OF THE WESTERN SNOWY PLOVER

Nests are hidden in dry sand



Getting to know the snowy plover

For thousands of years, California's beaches have provided this small shorebird with a place to nest and raise its young. Today, however, human use of beaches seriously threatens the snowy plover's survival. Visitors can best see the tiny birds dart and scurry in small flocks at the water's edge. Plovers seemingly vanish from sight when they return to dry sand and settle in depressions that hide and protect them from the wind.

Plovers lay their eggs in shallow nests on the beach above the high tide line. The birds and their eggs blend into the sand so well that beachgoers can easily disturb them or step on the eggs. Even people and pets passing nearby can cause plovers to abandon their nests, leaving the eggs vulnerable. For these reasons, they need your help to survive.

PLEASE WATCH WHERE YOU STEP!

What you can do to help the snowy plover raise its young

Avoid fenced or posted nesting areas, and stay away from nests if you see them elsewhere.

Remain on wet sand when walking on the beach.

Keep dogs (where allowed) on leashes.

Avoid attracting animals that feed on plover eggs and chicks, such as ravens, by properly disposing of garbage and by not feeding wildlife.

