

HELP PROTECT KIAWAH'S BEACH-NESTING BIRDS

Keep a Lookout for:



Black Skimmer



American Oystercatcher



Least Tern



Wilson's Plover

DISTURBANCE CAN THREATEN SURVIVAL

Many Kiawah bird species, including terns, skimmers, plovers, and oystercatchers nest on the beach. When these beach-nesting birds are disturbed and flushed off their nests by people or dogs, eggs and chicks are vulnerable to temperature extremes and predators.

Several beach-nesting bird species are declining due to habitat loss and disruption of nesting activities. It is easy for unknowing beach goers to crush the eggs or kill the chicks accidentally. Eggs and chicks blend in with their surroundings and are nearly invisible on the ground.



Wilson's Plover nest



Black Skimmer nest

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

KEEP YOUR DISTANCE. If birds appear agitated or take flight, you are too close! A general rule is to stay at least 300 feet (the length of a football field) away from groups of shorebirds. Observe birds from a distance using binoculars for a closer look.

KEEP OUT OF POSTED AREAS. During the spring and summer nesting season, signs may be posted in areas that are important for beach-nesting birds. Avoid posted areas and encourage others to do the same.

NEVER INTENTIONALLY FORCE BIRDS TO FLY. If you see birds on a beach, island, or sandbar, walk or steer around the birds to avoid disturbing them.

KEEP DOGS LEASHED. An unleashed dog can destroy a colony of beach-nesting birds in minutes. Keeps dogs away from all bird colonies and beach-nesting birds.

PROTECTING THE YOUNG

Adult beach-nesting birds are protective of their eggs and young. When a nesting area is disturbed, the adult birds see you as a danger and try to keep you away from their eggs and chicks. Sometimes an adult bird will pretend to have a broken wing to lure you and dangerous predators away from their young. Others may attempt to drive you away by calling out in protest, dive-bombing and even defecating on you!

If any of these things happen, you are too close to the birds!