

Nesting snowy plover means beach restrictions through Sept. 15

Beachgoers and residents along the Oregon coast are urged to help recovery efforts of the threatened western snowy plover by respecting nesting areas and beach restrictions during nesting season now through Sept. 15.

Beachgoers will see signs and ropes that identify sensitive plover nesting areas and list restrictions, including dogs (even on a leash), vehicles, kites, drones, camping and fires.

“We’re making great strides in reversing the downward slide of this species,” said Cin-

dy Burns, Siuslaw National Forest wildlife biologist. “But it takes all of us, so we urge people to do their part to understand nesting season rules and to share the beach this spring and summer.”

These small birds nest on open sand along Oregon’s beaches. Nests, and especially chicks, are well-camouflaged.

During nesting season, human disturbances can flush adult plovers away from their nests as they attempt to defend their young from the perceived predator. Left alone too long, eggs or chicks

can die from exposure, predators or people.

Recreation restrictions occur in designated plover management areas, small stretches of beach along the entire coastline where plovers are nesting or could potentially nest.

These areas comprise about 40 miles of Oregon’s 362 miles of shoreline. Detailed maps can be found on the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department website (<http://bit.ly/wsplover>) and on the Siuslaw National Forest website (www.fs.usda.gov/detail/siuslaw/alerts-notices/?cid=fseprd518707#mgmt-area).

On these plover beaches, the dry sand and dunes are closed to all access — except along official trails and on the wet sand — to protect eggs and chicks. Visitors may see roped off areas within these plover management areas, which serve to protect the most sensitive habitat; however, all dry sand on both sides of the rope is closed.

Wet sand areas on plover beaches remain open to foot and equestrian traffic. All

other recreation is off limits, include walking your dog (even on a leash), driving a vehicle, riding a bicycle, camping, fires, and flying kites or drones.

“Visitors will have access to hundreds of miles of beaches without these seasonal restrictions,” said Laurel Hillmann, Ocean Shores Specialist for Oregon State Parks. “By planning your trip, you can enjoy the coast and help keep these special birds safe.”

Visitors to the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area can review www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/siuslaw/recreation/recarea/?recid=42465&actid=93 to identify unrestricted recreation areas and information on riding motor vehicles on the sand.

Several land managers oversee beach activity for plover protection, including the U. S. Forest Service

(USFS), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD).

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service listed western snowy plovers as a threatened species in 1993. Habitat loss from invasive plants — as well as human disturbances, including litter and discarded food scraps that attract predators — have contributed to the birds’ decline.

The Oregon Dunes Restoration Collaborative (www.saveoregondunes.org/) is working with land managers to develop and implement a restoration strategy as well as raise public awareness about the need to restore the dunes ecosystem for snowy plover, rare plants and animals, and the unique recreation opportunities offered here.

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Whales from 1B

waters after wintering in the warm lagoons off the coast of Baja, Mexico. Many of the Gray whales will be accompanied by their new calves, born during the winter.

Fishing from 1B

The numbers of later returning right maxillary clipped fish should increase with each rain event for the rest of February through March.

The earlier returning left maxillary clipped fish are past peak and will continue to decrease for the rest of the season.

The Alsea still gets a good amount of the early returning stock that peaks in December and January, as well as a later stock that peaks in February and March.

ter.

The first large groups of whales pass by Oregon mid-March and the migratory stream typically continues into June. For more information about coast parks and campgrounds, visit oregonstateparks.org.

Expect more fish to show up with each rise in the river level from now through April.

Bobber fishing with jigs/bait, drift fishing, and casting lures are all effective ways to catch these hard-fighting fish.

Trout fishing in streams will reopen May 22.

SALMON RIVER: Winter steelhead

Winter steelhead will continue to enter the Salmon River system through the month of February as the later returning wild fish start to show up through March.



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