



The Snowy Plover

The snowy plover (*Charadrius nivosus*) is a small shorebird that lives on the sandy dunes along the West Coast including the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes Preserve!



The snowy plover is a small bird with white feathers and brown, black, and grey markings on their wings and head. They also have patches of brown or black on their shoulders. The snowy plover has a black beak and large eyes.



The snowy plover searches for food on the shore line of the beach. They eat beetles, flies, marine worms, crabs, clams, sand hoppers, seeds, and aquatic insects. While they search for food, the snowy plover dashes in and out of waves chasing after their prey.

The snowy plover builds their nest on the sand of sparsely vegetated coastal beaches and lakeshores. They often line their sand nests with seashells.



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The snowy plover is endangered due to loss of habitat. Many beaches are raked to make them more attractive to humans. This negatively impacts the snowy plover habitat that is used for breeding. The majority of snowy plover habitat has been taken over by humans and used for fun and recreation.

The best way to protect snowy plover habitat is to fence or rope off their nesting areas. The Guadalupe Dunes Preserve does their part to protect these small shorebirds by closing part of the dunes between March 1st and October 1st in order to protect the snowy plover's breeding and nesting habitat.



Photo by California Academy of Sciences

How can I help?

1. Respect the fences and signs, and stay outside of areas roped off for snowy plover habitat.
2. Pick up trash at the beach.
3. Keep dogs on a leash when at the beach or consider a dog friendly beach.
4. Keep a respectful distance from the nest of a snowy plover.
5. Fly your kites near the shoreline away from where snowy plovers rest.



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Complete the cryptogram puzzle to uncover a fun fact about the Snowy Plover!

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
5				11			4	8	17				26	24			22	18	16						

<u>S</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>O</u>																							
18	26	24	14	1			6	23	24	3	11	22		15	4	8	15	13	18		23	11	5	3	11
<u>T</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>E</u>		<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>T</u>		<u>I</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>J</u>		<u>S</u>	<u>T</u>		<u>T</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>E</u>		
16	4	11		26	11	18	16		14	8	16	4	8	26		17	21	18	16		16	4	22	11	11
<u>H</u>	<u>O</u>		<u>R</u>	<u>S</u>		<u>A</u>		<u>T</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>R</u>		<u>T</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>E</u>		<u>'</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>E</u>		<u>O</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>!</u>		
4	24		21	22	18		5	7	16	11	22		16	4	11	1		22	11		25	24	22	26	





Answer Key

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
19	12	13		24	11		14	16	22	23	1		15	20	10		21	3	7	4	5	25		17	

S N O W Y P L O V E R C H I C K S L E A V E
 3 15 20 25 17 10 1 20 5 24 21 13 14 16 13 23 3 1 24 19 5 24
T H E N E S T W I T H I N J U S T T H R E E
 7 14 24 15 24 3 7 25 16 7 14 16 15 22 4 3 7 7 14 21 24 24
H O U R S A F T E R T H E Y ' R E B O R N !
 14 20 4 21 3 19 11 7 24 21 7 14 24 17 21 24 12 20 21 15

