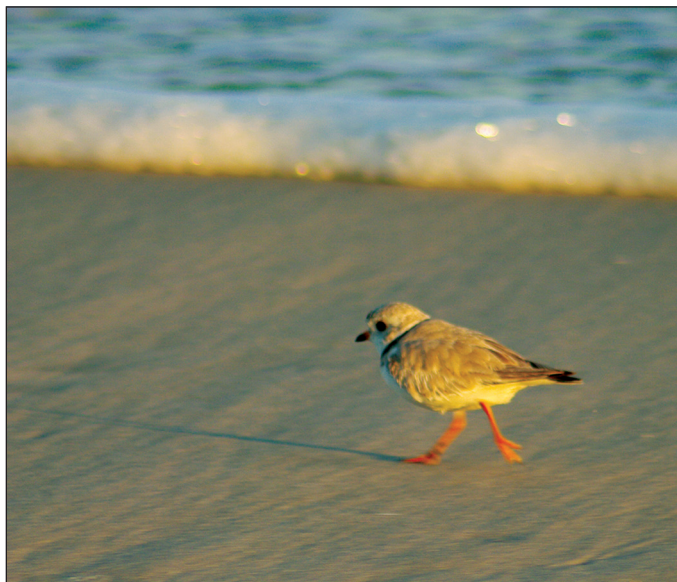


National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fire Island National Seashore
Long Island, New York



Help Protect the Piping Plover



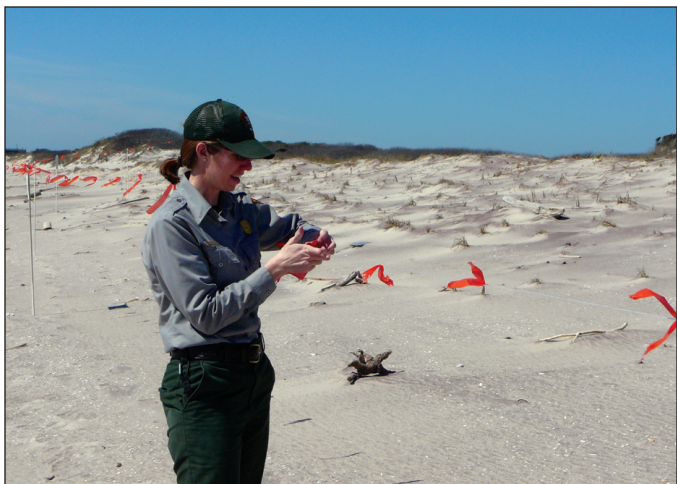
Piping plovers are federally threatened and New York State endangered. These migratory shorebirds nest on the beach.

Piping Plovers Blend In

Piping plovers nest on the sand and travel to the wrack-line and water's edge to forage for tiny crabs and other marine invertebrates. Part of this small shorebird's defense against natural predators is camouflage—its sand-colored plumage and eggs blend in with the beach environment. This also means that it can be hard for us to see them.

Piping Plovers on Fire Island

Piping plover courtship and mating usually occurs from late March through early June. Following courtship, the female bird lays three to four speckled eggs resembling pebbles in a shallow scraped depression in the sand. Tiny piping plover chicks hatch about 28 days later. For their first four weeks of life, chicks may wander hundreds of yards from the nest site, usually staying with one or both parents until they fly for the first time.



Symbolic fencing protects nesting habitat.

Protecting Piping Plovers

Fire Island National Seashore's piping plover monitoring and protection program begins in March with a restriction on driving, pets and kites on portions of the beach where these and another threatened shorebird, the least tern, are likely to nest. Symbolic fencing composed of carsonite posts, string line, and orange flagging, is installed to mark suitable plover habitat.



As nests are established, enclosures of metal fencing and mesh are constructed to protect both nest and eggs. After the chicks have fledged, restrictions on pets and kites are lifted and enclosures are removed. The symbolic

fencing is left in place to protect rare beach plants such as seabeach amaranth and seabeach knotweed.

How You Can Help:

- **Stay out of symbolically fenced areas**
- **Keep campsites, where permitted, 200 feet or more from fenced enclosures**
- **Carry In, Carry Out—Trash invites predators**
- **Notify a park ranger if you see a piping plover or an unprotected nest**

For More Information:

www.nps.gov/fiis/parkmgmt/piping-plovers-management.htm