

SNOWY PLOVER PATROL

PORTLAND
AUDUBON



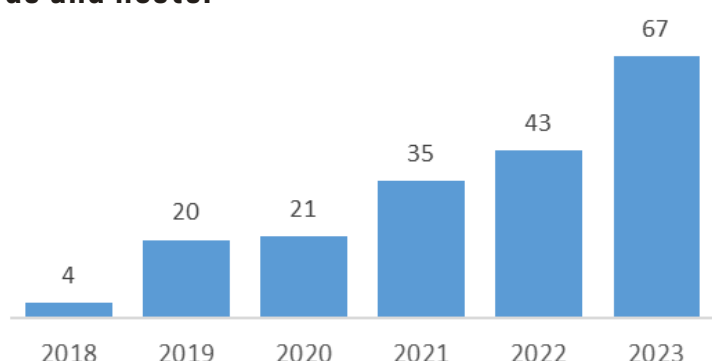
2023 SEASON UPDATE

2023 represented another year of rapid growth of plovers on all six monitored sites on Oregon's North Coast! This continued and sustained growth speaks to the success of dedicated recovery efforts.

WHAT IS PLOVER PATROL?

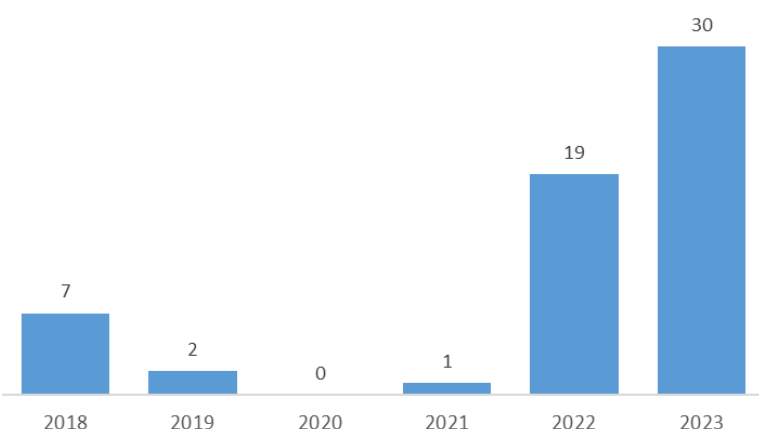
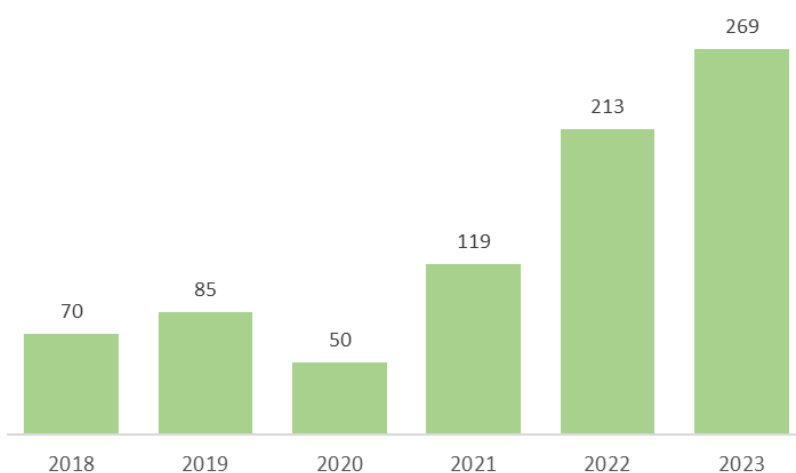
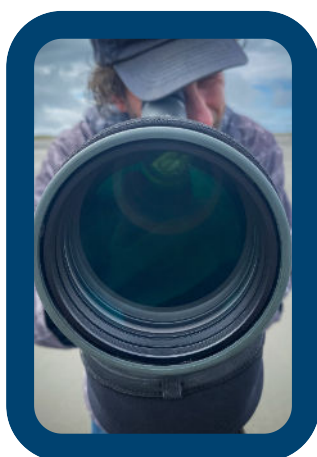
- Snowy plover research and monitoring surveys completed by community scientists.
- Classroom and Field Training
- Online Presentations
- Snowy Plover Interpretive Walks & other educational events

Snowy Plover Patrol is a team of trained community scientists organized by Portland Audubon that assist Oregon Parks and Recreation Staff in monitoring plovers across Oregon's North Coast, including four Snowy Plover Management Areas (SPMAs). These intensive surveys last 3-6 hours and involve covering miles of sandy beach looking for tiny tracks leading to camouflaged birds and nests.



Nests

Volunteer Surveys

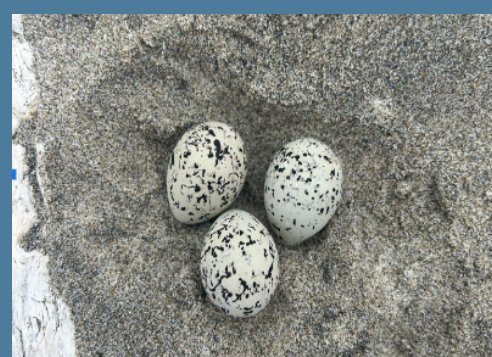


Fledged Chicks

WHY MONITOR PLOVERS?

The Western Snowy Plover is a small shorebird that lives and nests on beaches from Washington to southern California. It was federally listed in 1993 as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. Snowy plover populations declined due to a combination of threats including loss of coastal dune habitat from invasive grasses, subsidized predators (ravens, crows, and other beach scavengers who are attracted to litter and leftover food) along with human and pet disturbance from ever-increasing beach usage).

With the help of designated management areas, snowy plover populations have been experiencing rapid growth. In Oregon, US Fish and Wildlife Service and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department have designated 15 Snowy Plover Management Areas, five of which are on the North Coast.



Learn more about this project:

Look up Snowy Plover Patrol at www.audubonportland.org

2023 Season Results



In 2023, Snowy Plover Patrol conducted 259 surveys at 5 SPMAs and one other North Coast site between March and September. In total, surveys were conducted from Pacific City to the north tip of Clatsop Spit in Warrenton. Snowy Plovers were present at all five SPMAs, with sometimes as many as 37 plovers seen on a site during the breeding season! In total, volunteers made 1,627 observations of plovers on surveys in 2023, including almost 300 observations of famously hard-to-spot chicks.

Nest counts were again the highest ever recorded across all sites, with 67 nests monitored in the North Coast (up from 43 recorded in 2022). For the fourth year in a row, Clatsop Spit recorded the most nest attempts with 21 nests. For the second year in a row, Bayocean recorded the second-highest count with 18 nests, and Nehalem had 9. A habitat restoration project designed to attract plovers at Sitka Sedge had the intended outcome, recording 12 nests. An unprotected site at Necanicum Inlet in Clatsop County recorded 7 nests. In total, a record 25 nests hatched across all sites, double last year's record-breaking 13 hatched nests. Even more excitingly, 30 chicks fledged in 2023, beating our last highest record of 19, set last year. It is clear that plovers are continuing to increase in number and succeed across the North Coast.

2023 was another record-breaking year in volunteer effort as well: 43 volunteers surveyed over 800 hours across 259 surveys. This robust and careful data collection has led to increased knowledge about how plovers reinhabit their historic breeding range on the North Coast, and increased understanding of the issues plovers face in achieving nest success.

We couldn't have done it without our dedicated volunteers who enthusiastically stepped up to achieve these milestones. We want to thank these volunteers on the ground as well as those who continued to support the program from afar. Your support matters to these special birds!

Western Snowy Plover Management Areas

Watch for seasonal restrictions during nesting season, March 15-Sept. 15

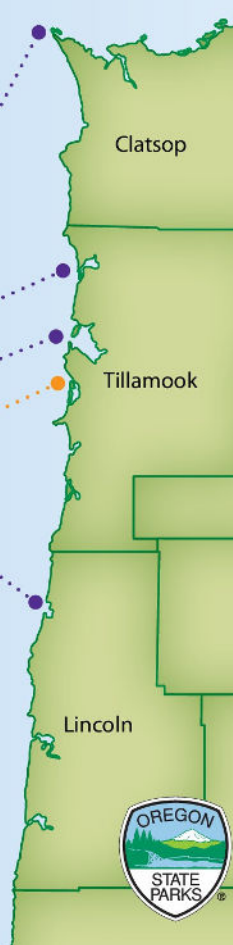
- Clatsop Spit
- Nehalem Spit
- Bayocean Spit
- Netarts Spit
- South Sand Lake Spit

Occupied* (restrictions apply)

No restrictions yet

- Oregon State Parks
- US Forest Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- Other

*"Occupied" means that breeding pairs have been established in the recent past



Oregon State Parks



INTERPRETIVE WALKS

Portland Audubon led 16 educational interpretive walks for the beachgoing public, as well as local community groups at all of our Snowy Plover Management Areas, reaching hundreds of visitors from throughout the Pacific Northwest. In addition, we delivered presentations to local community groups, scientific conferences. Our Plover Patrol program was profiled in several media outlets as well. These opportunities to share our work provided natural history information about plovers and Oregon's North Coast, as well as highlighted the important work done by volunteers.



Get involved!

Join the Snowy Plover Patrol team or sign up for a snowy plover walk
Visit our Plover Patrol page under Community Science on Portland Audubon's website