We know that Oregon's 362 miles of shoreline and beaches are a magnet for happy dogs and their people. Dogs are welcome at (almost) all times and places on Oregon's beaches. But please keep in mind that all dogs, even well-behaved ones, can be a threat to birds and wildlife. Some beaches are part of protected nesting grounds of the western snowy plover. During its nesting season (March 15-Sept. 15), certain recreation activities may be restricted or prohibited.

The Bird
The western snowy plover is a tiny shorebird that lives and breeds along some west coast beaches from Washington to southern California. It is a threatened species under the federal government’s Endangered Species Act (ESA). Plovers nest in dry open sand, in tiny, shallow scrapes that are very well camouflaged. Not only are nests easy to miss (or step on), but the bird will abandon its eggs if repeatedly disturbed by activities it considers a threat—activities we may see as harmless, like walking a dog, throwing a ball and flying a kite.

The Law
Oregon State Parks is legally responsible for managing recreation on Oregon's ocean shore. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) oversees the ESA and thus the status of the western snowy plover.

What is a management area?
Management areas are stretches of beach that are either known to be occupied by breeding plovers, or places where their presence is significant and the habitat attractive. Not all management areas have recreation restrictions.

What does this mean for beachgoers?
It means that visitors need to watch for special signs or fences during nesting season and follow the rules. Generally, where plovers are nesting, dogs, vehicles, bicycles, camping and fires are prohibited. Pedestrians and equestrians need to stay on wet sand. Potential nesting areas may call for dogs to be leashed and driving to be curtailed.

Beach Behavior We Love
- Walk around birds instead of through their flocks.
- Leash your dogs before they chase birds.
- Respect restricted areas set aside for endangered or nesting species.
- Stay away from birds and marine mammals that look sick or unable to get away from humans.
- Always clean up after your dog.
- Always keep your dog on a leash or under voice control.

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

For more info, go to bit.ly/wsplover

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
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All information or fees subject to change without notice. This brochure is available in alternative formats upon request. Call 1-800-551-6949. Oregon Relay for the hearing impaired: dial 711.

Western Snowy Plover
South Coast Beaches
Places to Play with your Dog