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10 Things You Can Do To Help Protect Piping Plovers

- 1. Respect signs and fenced areas.** Pedestrians may flush incubating plovers from nests, exposing eggs to predators or excessive temperatures or accidentally step on eggs or chicks. Human disturbance may also cause nest abandonment and dramatically reduce the amount of time chicks spend feeding. So please, respect signs and do not walk through fenced areas.
- 2. Be a responsible pet owner.** Walk dogs in areas where piping plovers are not present and keep cats indoors. Dogs can chase plovers causing them stress and step on eggs and chicks causing mortality. Cats are a major predator of many types of birds including piping plovers.
- 3. Fill in holes on the beach.** Piping plover chicks can fall into holes in the sand and become trapped. Please fill in any holes in the sand.
- 4. Fly kites a safe distance away from plovers.** Kites can be very disturbing to piping plovers, as they think they are predatory birds. Although kites may not appear to bother the plovers, often their reaction is to freeze, which prevents them from feeding and causes stress. Kite flying should be kept at least 200 yards from adult and juvenile piping plovers.
- 5. Don't approach or linger near piping plovers or their nests.** It is exciting to watch this small shorebird as it carries out its daily activities, but being too close can disturb the birds. Bring binoculars and view them from a distance.
- 6. Teach children safe viewing and respect for wildlife.** Small moving creatures can be a temptation for children, but chasing or catching chicks may cause stress or injury to the birds and could lead to death. Point out the birds to children and have them watch from a safe distance.
- 7. Obey local laws about fireworks.** Fireworks cause stress to adult piping plovers and their chicks and also can cause accidental fires that can destroy dune vegetation and pose a risk to oceanfront development. Fireworks are not permitted at Hampton Beach State Park or at Seabrook Beach.
- 8. Pick up trash and food on the beach.** Garbage attracts predators such as gulls and crows that prey upon piping plover eggs, chicks and sometimes even adults. Please refrain from feeding gulls and be sure to bring home with you all food and food containers you brought to the beach.
- 9. Report observations.** Report any observations of vehicle use, firework use, dog walking, vandalism, or any other suspicious activities to your local police department.
- 10. Volunteer!** If you enjoy watching the birds and are interested in helping protect the piping plovers, you can help out by contacting New Hampshire Fish and Game and volunteering.