



## WHAT'S ALL THE FUSS OVER THE WESTERN SNOWY PLOVER?

Dog access restrictions can become confusing. For example, we asked our friends at DogTrekker.com, the leading authority in pup-friendly travel in California, why some beaches close when the snowy plovers are around.



It turns out that Pacific coast populations of this small shorebird have been declining for years, due to development pressures and habitat disturbances. The mere site of dogs can scare snowy plovers from their nest, endangering eggs, chicks and adult birds alike.

The California Department of Parks and Recreation has created a [great resource page](#), answering questions such as:

- Are dogs and beach users being singled out?
- My dog could never catch one of these birds. Besides it's well behaved. Why can't I take it on the beach? What if I put it on a leash?
- What's wrong with my flying my kite or playing catch?
- It's just one tiny bird, what's the big deal?

We all play a role in protecting rare species and delicate habitats. [Leave Only Paw Prints™](#) is a set of values and a way of life. We take a holistic approach to protecting pups and park access across California, suggesting simple tips for mindful dog travel.

In addition to minimizing impact on wildlife and natural habitats, we are also benefiting ourselves as dog parents. Many park districts have tightened leash requirements, expanded restrictions, and in some cases, banned dogs from formerly dog-friendly beaches and trails; due in part to issues related to environmental issues and not packing out of dog waste.