

HOW YOU CAN HELP

KNOW WHERE THEY ARE

By familiarising yourself with potential breeding locations you can help reduce disturbance to a nesting site and know to look out for their camouflaged nests.

RESPECT ZONED OFF AREAS

Areas with signage and rope are “no go” zones from April to August as these sites are protected for wildlife.

AVOID DISTURBANCE BY BOAT

Reduce the disturbance on the water by only landing boats on designated moorings and landing areas, keep water sports away from the shoreline, respect speed limits and minimise noise near breeding sites.

BACK AWAY IF YOU DISTURB A BREEDING SPECIES

Short, sharp alarm calls, birds with full beaks or coming unusually near to you usually mean you are too close to young or eggs, which can often be very well hidden. If you see any of this behaviour, you should back up the way you came to avoid any risk of disturbing or injuring young, being careful to watch where you tread.

RAISE AWARENESS

Help spread the word about the importance of our coastline for beach-nesting birds and how everyone can help these endangered species by following these key guidelines.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR WILDLIFE

As the population of Essex grows, we must ensure we’re sharing the shore with our breeding wildlife, so that the tiny little tern, the ringed plover and the brightly beaked oystercatcher can grow up without disturbance.

Essex Wildlife Trust and the **RSPB** are working together to protect our coastal wildlife. We do this by creating the ideal habitat for beach-nesting birds, monitoring the populations and working with the public to raise awareness of how we can all allow Essex’s coastal bird populations to thrive.

To find out more about the project, visit
WWW.ESSEXWT.ORG.UK/SHARE-OUR-SHORES

Share your sightings with us on social media, tag **Essex Wildlife Trust** and **RSPB** on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and use **#ShareOurShores**

If you have any questions, please contact the **Share Our Shores team** at shareourshores@essexwt.org.uk



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Photo credits: Front cover: Terry Whittaker/2020VISION Inside: Little tern: Lyn Ibbitson
Ringed Plover: Fergus Gill/2020VISION Oystercatcher: Tom Marshall

PROTECTING OUR COASTAL WILDLIFE

Essex Wildlife Trust and the RSPB are working in partnership to protect Essex’s beach-nesting birds.



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BIRDS TO LOOK OUT FOR



Little tern are one of our rarest breeding seabirds, returning each year from west Africa in May to breed on our shingle beaches and feed on fish close to shore. Listen for their chattering call or look for their yellow beak with a black tip.

LITTLE TERN

RINGED PLOVER



Ringed plover lay their eggs on the beach from late March. These small camouflaged birds feed on insects along the beach and crustaceans along mudflats. In the presence of predators, these birds can pretend to be injured to deter threats away from their nest.

OYSTERCATCHER



Oystercatcher have a distinctive orange beak, red ring around their eyes and smart black and white plumage. They are fiercely territorial and their loud 'ke-beek' calls may indicate they are nesting nearby. Their diet includes cockles, mussels and worms.

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KEY SITES

Dotted along the Blackwater and Colne estuaries, these sites provide the ideal home for Essex's most threatened beach-nesting birds. Throughout spring and summer areas of prime habitat for beach-nesting birds are roped off using ropes and signage makes it clear where access is not permitted.

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BREEDING SEASON

APRIL – AUGUST

All wild birds' nests and eggs are protected by law; please avoid the roped off areas at the above sites, to ensure the beach-nesting birds are not disturbed.



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