

WESTERN SNOWY PLOVER (CHARADRIUS ALEXANDRINUS NIVOSA)

Federal/California status: Threatened/--



Western snowy plovers are small, pale-colored shorebirds. They are generally tan above and white below, and have a thin dark bill, legs, and earpatch. They also have dark patches on either side of the upper breast. Snowy plovers average about 6.25 inches (16 cm) in length.

The western snowy plover nests in the San Joaquin Valley on beaches, dry mud or salt flats, and sand margins of rivers, lakes, and evaporation ponds. They require sandy, gravelly, or friable (crumbly) soil for nesting. Snowy plovers tend to be site-faithful, with the majority of the birds returning to the same nesting location year after year.

Western snowy plovers are known to nest in Kings, Kern, and Tulare counties.

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