

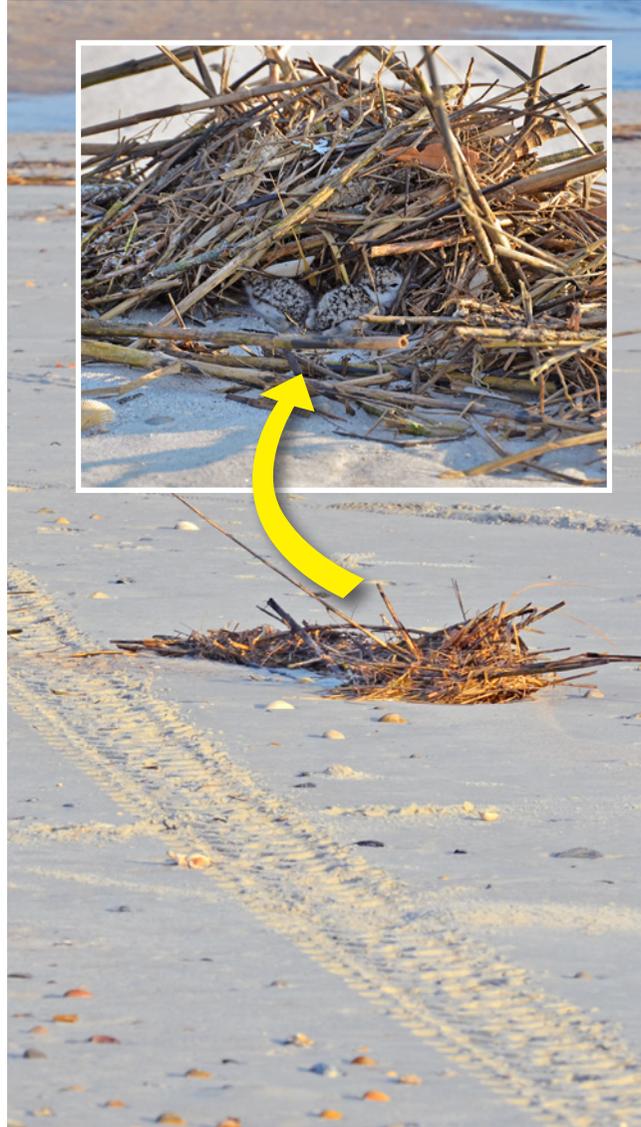
You might not see any chicks here...



© Pat Leary

See next page...

...but they are hiding in the wrack!



© Pat Leary

For more information:

Please visit [MyFWC.com/conservation/you-conserve/wildlife/beach-driving/](http://MyFWC.com/conservation/you-conserve/wildlife/beach-driving/)

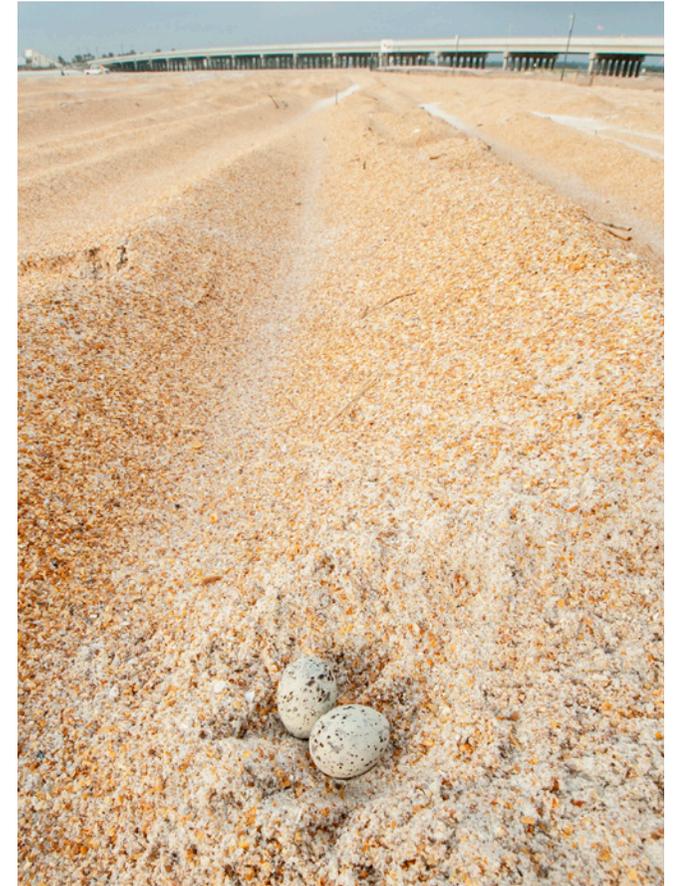


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# Beach Drivers: Please watch out for wildlife!



Seabird eggs in tire ruts. © David Macri



Florida Fish and Wildlife  
Conservation Commission

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## If you patrol the beach with a vehicle, this guide is for you...



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Driving on the beach can be harmful to wildlife and is not permitted on many Florida beaches.

However, beach driving may be necessary for law enforcement, first responders, and some surveys.

It is important for beach drivers to be aware of wildlife on the beach. Shorebirds nest on Florida's beaches between February and late August, laying eggs directly on the sand. Sea turtle hatchlings may also be on the beach from June to December.

Shorebird nests, chicks, and turtle hatchlings are very hard to see and can be easily killed by vehicles.

## Please keep in mind:

- Shorebirds rely on their camouflage for protection. When startled, chicks often crouch in the sand, wrack (seaweed and marine debris at the tide line), or in tire ruts. They may “freeze” in place and might not move out of the way in time.



Chick in tire rut. © David Macri

- Sea turtle hatchlings may also be hidden in sand, wrack or tire ruts.



Sea turtle hatchling. Tomo Hirama, FWC

- These animals are difficult to see at any speed, but **especially at speeds faster than 10 mph.**

## Always follow these rules:

- Avoid driving on the beach at night.
- Minimize ruts by using lightweight vehicles and four-wheel drive.
- Use designated beach access points and go directly to the hard sand below the tide line.
- Don't drive on the upper beach or through wrack.
- Drive **10 mph or less** to see any eggs, chicks or hatchlings in your path.
- Drive even slower in rain and fog.
- Be especially careful near posted nesting areas. Chicks may be outside the boundaries!
- Finally, watch for birds that are **calling out, running or flying towards you, or pretending to have a broken wing...** These behaviors signal that nests or chicks are nearby!

Scan ahead carefully to make sure nothing is in your path, then proceed *very slowly*.



Shorebird feigning a broken wing. © Raya Pruner and Marvin Friel