

THE KENTISH PLOVER: THE SECRET OF THE DUNES

The **Kentish plover** (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) is a small bird that lays its eggs on the beach, in dunes and along coastal wetlands. Its populations have declined considerably, as its habitat has disappeared in many areas where it used to breed. The intense use of the beaches is a major problem for the conservation of the plover, unless we respect the delimited areas (trampling of nests, eggs or chicks).

When the **spring** arrives, the plovers begin to select a breeding site. This is the start of the most vulnerable time of the year for them, and as beach users, it is important to be very careful.

Breeding plovers regulate the temperature of their eggs (the sand on the beach can exceed 50° C), and if the eggs are left unattended for too long, they can be destroyed by the heat.

Dogs and cats are a danger to the survival of the plover's eggs and chicks. **The presence of dogs on the beach may result in the bird spending less time protecting its eggs.** The more the bird leaves the nest and the longer the time spent away, the more likely it is that the high temperatures will kill the embryos growing inside the eggs.



Remember that the regulations of this protected natural area prohibit dogs on the beaches all year round. Please comply with the signs you see along the trail.

IF WE RESPECT WILDLIFE, WE ALL WIN!