

Be aware — nesting season for coastal birds has begun

AUDUBON FLORIDA

Sea, shore, and wading birds flock to Florida's coastline in the spring and summer for breeding and nesting season. Beach-nesting and other coastal birds have begun laying eggs along Florida's coasts. Spring and summer mark critical times of year for these vulnerable species, as they must avoid human disturbance, storms, and predators to successfully raise their chicks.

While wading birds nest in coastal trees, sea and shorebirds lay their eggs right on the sand. They all perceive people as a threat and will take flight whenever beachgoers, or their dogs, approach too closely. Repeated human disturbance often results in birds abandoning the colony. If they can't find a better location, their nesting season is wasted.

These birds nest directly on the sand and shell shoreline and are extremely vulnerable to human disturbance. It is important for boaters to heed signage and avoid areas posted as "no trespassing," even if they don't notice any birds.

How to help beach-nesting birds raise



JEFF LIECHTY/AUDUBON FLORIDA
American Oystercatcher on its nest.

their next generation of chicks to adulthood:

- Respect posted areas, even if you don't see any birds inside.
- If birds dive-bomb you, carefully move away as there may be a nest nearby.
- Ensure no trash or food remnants are left behind, as this can attract predators.
- Keep dogs on a leash, on board your boat or at home.

A nonprofit conservation organization since 1905, Audubon believes in a world in which people and wildlife thrive. Learn more at www.FL.Audubon.org. ■

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