the nonbreeding season

Canada's darter, E. punctatus, during
Note: The Loogerhead Shrike's nest site

Canada's darter, E. punctatus, during
Note: The Loogerhead Shrike's nest site

Canada's darter, E. punctatus, during
Note: The Loogerhead Shrike's nest site

Canada's darter, E. punctatus, during
Note: The Loogerhead Shrike's nest site

Canada's darter, E. punctatus, during
Note: The Loogerhead Shrike's nest site

Canada's darter, E. punctatus, during
Note: The Loogerhead Shrike's nest site
**SNOWY PLOVER**
*Charadrius alexandrinus*

**NESTING:** On beaches, dry mud or salt flats, or the sandy edges of rivers, lakes, or ponds. The nest is only a scrape, though the birds often place it within grass tufts or among bits of debris and twigs that conceal the eggs.

**FOOD:** Mostly insects, also aquatic invertebrates and small fish. While foraging, the Snowy Plover usually hunts visually, sometimes quivering its leg to stir up prey, running and picking items from the substrate, and probing beneath the surface of mud or sand (in or near shallow water).

**RANGE:** Widespread, reaching all but northern Asia, New Zealand, and Oceania.

**WINTERS** (North American populations): mostly from northwestern Mexico and the Bahamas south to Venezuela (in the east) and Chile (in the west). Part of the California population does not migrate.

**IN PERIL:** The species faces extirpation as a breeder on the U.S. west coast, and a recent survey of Gulf of Mexico beaches from Mississippi to Florida found fewer than 200 pairs.

**NOTES:** The Snowy Plover sometimes forms poorly defined colonies. Populations in the East produce one brood per year, but many pairs in the West produce two.

**JEOPARDIZED:** By the loss of suitable breeding habitat and by disturbance and destruction of nests on the remaining beach habitats.

**LISTING:** Blue-Listed 1972–82 and listed as of Special Concern in 1986. By 1982 there was confirmation that the Southern Pacific Coast and Middle Pacific Coast regions were undergoing serious losses. Losses on the Pacific Coast were verified by the Christmas Bird Count, which showed a 93-percent decline in central California and a 68-percent decline in southern California. It was suggested that the condition of inland nesting habitat might account for local problems. By 1986, Special Concern was warranted, as declines were reported only from the Middle Pacific Coast Region, owing, perhaps, to insufficient coverage by observers in other parts of the species' range. Reports did not indicate major regional population declines in the Southeast, although declines were reported in parts of Florida and Ontario, and moderate to severe declines were reported in the Southern Great Plains Region. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service qualified the western subspecies, *Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus*, and the southeastern subspecies, C. a. tennuirostris, as Category 2 (see p. 99) candidates. As of 1991, both the western and the southeastern subspecies continue to be recognized as Category 2 candidates, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's listing priority system; thus the Service has information indicating the possible appropriateness of listing, but feels that further information is still needed.