



Glynn County, Georgia

Wildlife Spotting Guide

Coast Guard Beach, St. Simons Island · 16 animals and plants to spot



Loggerhead sea turtle

MAY-OCT

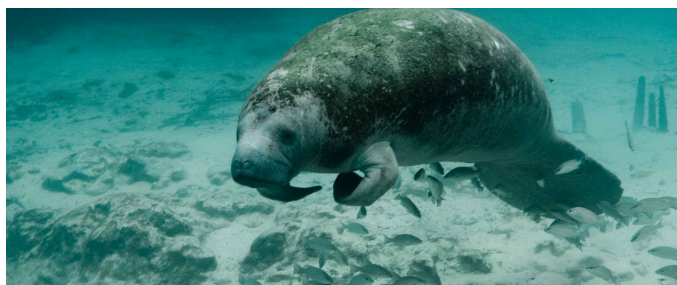
Nests here at night. Tracks look like tractor tire marks. Stakes and screens mark a nest — leave them be. Lights off after dark.



Bottlenose dolphin

YEAR-ROUND

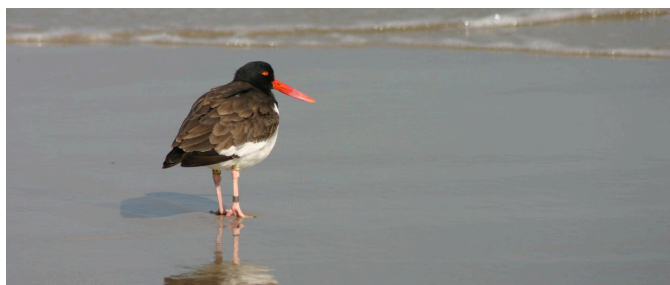
Watch for curved fins just past the breakers, often in small groups. Feeding or harassing them is a federal offense.



West Indian manatee

APR-OCT

Slow and gentle. Look in tidal creeks and calm water near sandbars.



American oystercatcher

YEAR-ROUND

Crow-sized, with a carrot-orange bill and a loud whistle. Georgia's islands hold over 10% of the Atlantic Coast population.



Wilson's plover

YEAR-ROUND

Here all year. Nests right on the dry sand in spring and summer, so watch your step above the high-tide line.



Least tern

SPRING-SUMMER

Georgia's smallest tern. Chicks hide in plain sight on open sand.



Piping plover

JULY-APRIL

A pale, sand-colored plover. Here almost all year, away only from May to early July to nest up north. Federally protected.



Red knot

SPRING + FALL

Over half the rufa red knot population has been recorded on this coast, refueling on a migration of up to 9,000 miles.

Give birds room, nesting or not. If birds fly up calling, you are too close — back away the way you came. Birds treat every dog as a predator, even a friendly leashed one, and a flushed flock burns energy it needs for the flight north.



Sanderling

YEAR-ROUND

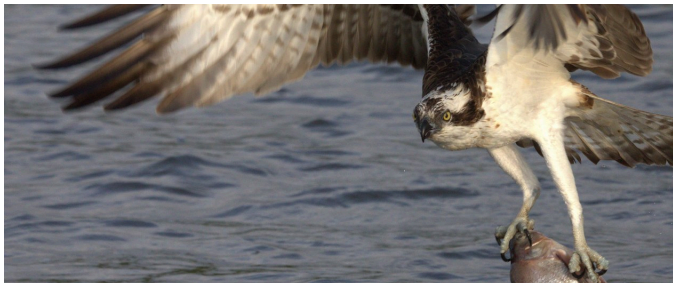
The little wind-up bird chasing each wave in and out. Adults leave to nest in the Arctic; young birds stay all summer.



Brown pelican

YEAR-ROUND

Glides in long, low lines over the surf, then crash-dives for fish.



Osprey

YEAR-ROUND

Hovers high, then hits the water feet first. Listen for a sharp whistle.



Atlantic ghost crab

YEAR-ROUND

Pale crab with periscope eyes. Find its round burrow holes in dry sand at dusk.



Fiddler crab

WARM MONTHS

Gathers by the hundreds at the marsh edge. Males wave one oversized claw.



Horseshoe crab

SPRING-SUMMER

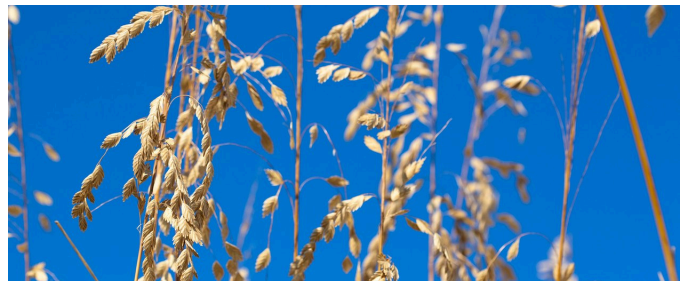
Older than the dinosaurs. If one is stranded upside down, flip it gently by the shell edge, never the tail.



Sand dollar

YEAR-ROUND

Dark and fuzzy means it is alive. Put it back. Keep only the white ones.



Sea oats

YEAR-ROUND

The grass that builds the dunes. Protected by Georgia law. Never pick.



Scan for the full wildlife guide glynncounty.org/beachwildlife

Watch from a distance. Never feed or touch wildlife. Injured or stranded animal?

Georgia DNR: 1-800-2-SAVE-ME (1-800-272-8363)

Photos: USFWS, NOAA and other public-domain sources; Stephan Sprinz, Wilhelm1951, Judy Gallagher and Melissa McMasters (CC BY).