Pawsitive Beach Tips

- Bring fresh water and provide shade for your dog to avoid heat stroke on hot days. Drinking sea water can make your dog sick.
- Rinse off salt water that can irritate your dog’s skin and paws. Remove tar with cooking oil, not solvents. Sunblock can prevent sunburn on noses and pink skin.
- Very hot sand and asphalt can burn paw pads.
- Bring treats for training.
- Bring biodegradable bags with you to pick up your dog’s “deposits”. Leaving feces or bags on the beach is illegal litter and will pollute the ocean.
- Keeping your dog on a leash and under your control at all times is good for your dog as well as the birds! It helps to prevent your dog getting in fights with other dogs. Not all dogs are well trained! It helps keep them away from “stuff” that might make them sick, such as feces.
- Training your dog to “go” at home before you leave can keep the beach cleaner and reduce environmental and financial costs of plastic bags.
- Bring your cell phone in case of emergency and call 911 so your call will get to the right dispatch for that beach.

Ventura County Beaches

Leashed

Point Mugu State Park
Thornehill Broome Beach
Sycamore Cove Beach
Ormond Beach
Port Hueneme Beach Park
Silver Strand Beach
Channel Islands Harbor Beach
Hollywood Beach **
Oxnard Beach Park
Mandalay County Park
McGrath State Beach
Marina Cove Beach
Marina Park
San Buenaventura State Beach
Promenade Park
Surfer’s Point
Emma Wood State Beach
Solimar Beach
Faria Beach County Park
Rincon Parkway North
Hobson County Park
Oil Piers Beach
Mussel Shoals Beach
La Conchita Beach

No Pets on Sand

Ventura County beaches are important habitat to a variety of shorebirds. We share the county’s beautiful beaches with wildlife that depend upon it for their survival. Many are also part of the California State Parks which, in general, do not permit dogs on the beach, whether on leash or not. (Dogs are permitted on leash within camp grounds and picnic areas that are within the state parks. Beaches that are within the jurisdiction of the County and the cities of Oxnard and Ventura permit dogs on leash. The City of Port Hueneme does not permit dogs on its beach.

This brochure provides helpful information for dog owners visiting Ventura County’s shoreline and is sponsored by:

Ventura Audubon Society

** Dogs on leash OK Sunrise to 9 AM and 5 PM to Sunset
Sharing the Shore

Our beaches are a thin ribbon of habitat that shorebirds need to rest and feed during their long distance migrations. As our population increases, places crucial for shorebird survival are decreasing. You as a dog owner can help.

Throughout the year, many different shorebirds can be found on the beaches of Ventura County. The little birds that run up and down in groups frantically digging for sand crabs on our beaches are Sanderlings. They migrate to Ventura County beaches from the Arctic where they nest and breed. Whimbrel, Long-billed Curlew, Marbled Godwit, Red Knots and Black-necked Stilts are also seen, mostly as they migrate between nesting and wintering grounds.

Nesting birds see you and your dog as predators. Dogs, especially off-leash dogs, can kill or disturb nesting plovers, terns or avocets and their chicks. Simple rope barricades are put up at most of these beaches in early March to protect the nesting areas from disturbance. Signs including some made by students in the Share the Shore Art Project are hung on the ropes to help identify the area.

Western Snowy Plovers and California Least Terns, by contrast, breed locally on certain beaches in Ventura County. Both are federally protected species under the Endangered Species Act and it is illegal to disturb them (even unintentionally as dogs often do). Snowy Plovers nest at McGrath State Beach, Mandalay State Beach, Hollywood Beach and Ormond Beach. Least Terns nest at McGrath and Ormond. Both nest on dry sand above the surf line from March through August. The nests are depressions in the sand. Both birds and their eggs are well camouflaged and easily stepped on. We also find American Avocets nesting on our beaches.

Of course, dogs can’t read; so, it is up to you to keep your dog off the beach!

We can be aware and share the shore with four simple actions:

- Walk around birds instead of through flocks.
- Keep pets on leash so they do not chase birds.
- Respect closed areas set aside for endangered or nesting species.
- Stay away from birds that look sick or injured or are unable to get away from humans.

It’s easy to take your leash to the beach!

Dog Parks

Fortunately, there are inland parks where dogs are permitted to run free. These include:

- Soule Park in Ojai: (Dog Park only 7:30 am to dusk, daily)
- College Park in Oxnard: (Dog Park only dawn to dusk, daily)
- Arroyo Verde Park in Ventura: (Off-leash hours: 6-9 am; Tues-Sun: 6-8 am)
- Camino Real Park in Ventura: (Dog Park dawn to dusk; Wed: 9 am – dusk)

Helpful Info

- California State Parks: http://www.parks.ca.gov/
- www.VenturaAudubon.org

If you find an injured bird, call Wildlife Care of Ventura County: (805) 498-2794. Alternatively, call The Ojai Raptor Center at (805) 677-4546. Call the Marine Mammal Center at (805) 687-3255 if you see an injured mammal.