

Let's go Birding at the Beach!

Birds are everywhere! In your backyard, neighbourhood park and even at the beach. Birds, like the Lesser Yellowlegs, that are typically found at the shore and other coastal habitats like mudflats and lagoons are called *shorebirds*.

These birds come in different sizes and shapes. They are always on the move, checking the shoreline for food. They have special bills that help them poke into the mud or sand and in between rocks. All of which we can use to help us identify them!

Here are some clues to help you identify shorebirds the next time you visit the beach. You can ask an adult to print a copy to take with you to the beach. But be sure to keep it out of the water!

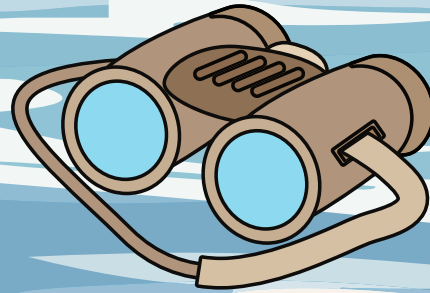


Look

for these

Shorebirds

at the beach



American
Oystercatcher

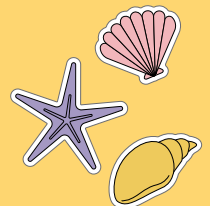
Wilson's
Plover



Spotted
Sandpiper



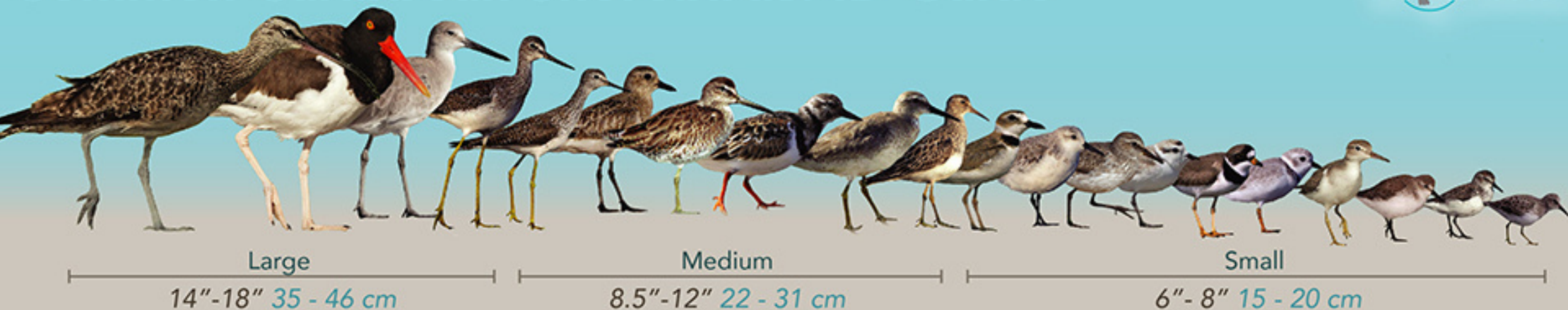
Sanderling



Print & Take to the Beach With You!



Common Caribbean Shorebirds: ID Guide



Large Shorebirds

Whimbrel 17.5" 44.5 cm
American Oystercatcher 17.5" 44.5 cm
Willet 15" 38 cm
Greater Yellowlegs 14" 35.5 cm
American Avocet* 18" 46 cm
Black-necked Stilt* 14" 35.5 cm

*not pictured

Medium Shorebirds

Lesser Yellowlegs 9.5" 24 cm
Black-bellied Plover 11.5" 29 cm
Short-billed Dowitcher 11" 28 cm
Ruddy Turnstone 9.5" 24 cm
Red Knot 10.5" 26.5 cm
Pectoral Sandpiper 8.5" 21.5 cm
Killdeer* 10.5" 26.5 cm
Stilt Sandpiper* 8.5" 21.5 cm
Solitary Sandpiper* 8.5" 21.5 cm

Small Shorebirds

Wilson's Plover 7.75" 19.5 cm
Sanderling 7.75" 19.5 cm
White-rumped Sandpiper 6" 15 cm
Snowy Plover 6.25" 16 cm
Semipalmated Plover 7.25" 18.5 cm
Piping Plover 7.25" 18.5 cm

Spotted Sandpiper 7.5" 19 cm
Western Sandpiper 6.5" 16.5 cm
Semipalmated Sandpiper 6.25" 16 cm
Least Sandpiper 6" 15 cm

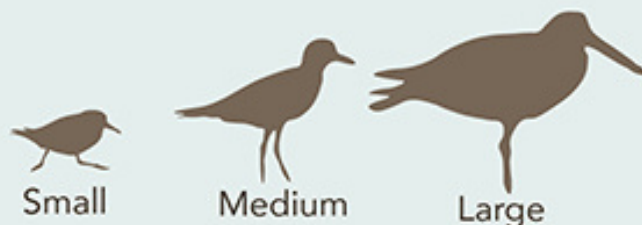
Lesser Yellowlegs & Ruddy Turnstone: Brad Winn;
Red Knot: Anthony Levesque; Pectoral Sandpiper &
White-rumped Sandpiper: Nick Dorian; All other photos: Walker Golder

Clues to help identify shorebirds

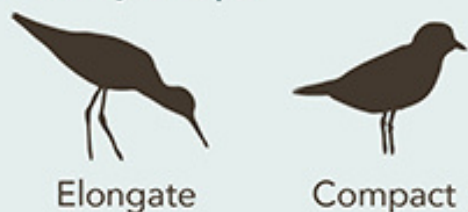
Size & Shape

Size

How big is it compared to other birds?



Overall Body Shape



Specific Body Parts

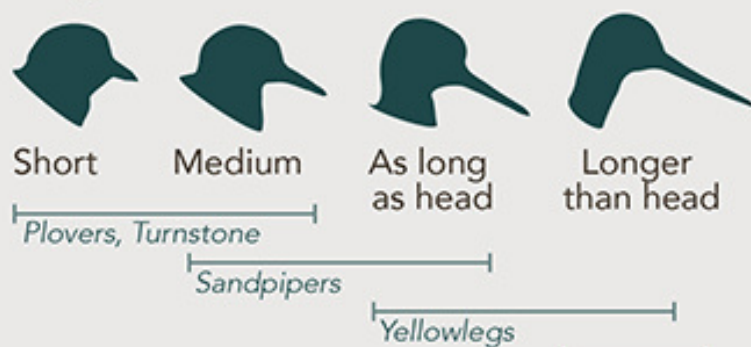
Bill & leg color

Eye size *Plovers = larger, sandpipers = smaller*

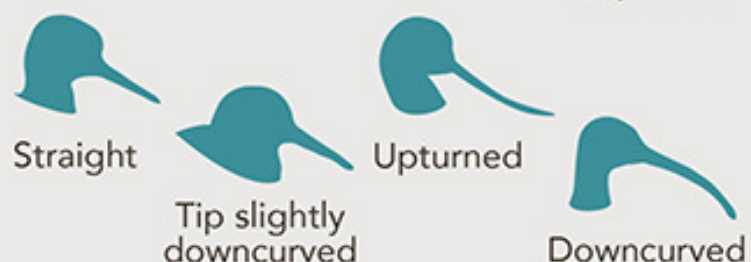
Leg & neck length

Bill Length & Shape

Length



Curvature



Foraging Behavior

Sandpipers

Peeps (Semipalmated, Western, Least)

Walk or run with the head down, picking and probing

Spotted Sandpiper

Bobs tail up and down when walking or standing

White-rumped Sandpiper

Tail tips up while probing

Stilt Sandpiper

Probes mud like "oil derrick," rear end tips up

Plovers

Run & stop, pick, hiccup, run & stop

Yellowlegs

Stroll and pick

Dowitchers

Probe mud with "sewing machine" bill, body stays horizontal