






Little terns

The UK's smallest tern needs your help



Little terns travel over 5,000 km to breed in Britain over the summer, nesting on sand and shingle beaches. Their numbers are in decline due to predation, an increased frequency in storm events and from disturbance by people.

Here's how you can help these birds:

-  Familiarise yourself with key Little tern habitats and potential breeding locations - their eggs are laid close to the shoreline, camouflaged with the sand and shingle.
-  Respect signage, instructions and roped off areas on any Little tern nesting sites.
-  Reduce disturbance on land by keeping a safe distance and ensuring dogs are kept under control at all times.
-  Reduce disturbance on the water by landing on designated sites only, keeping your distance and keeping noise to a minimum.
-  Help us raise awareness for how to help Little terns and please let us know if you spot any nesting Little terns.

Conservation in action



Essex Wildlife Trust have been working in collaboration with the RSPB to manage our coastal reserves and make them into optimum Little tern habitat.

Together we have been undertaking habitat management in the Blackwater and Colne estuaries. By putting up signage and information, deploying life-size decoys and installing raised features like sand lenses, we are optimistic that we are giving the Little terns the best chance of success, while enabling people to enjoy our wonderful coastlines.

During 2018, six pairs of Little terns nested successfully in the Blackwater and Colne estuaries - the most we've had nesting in Essex for a whole century!

