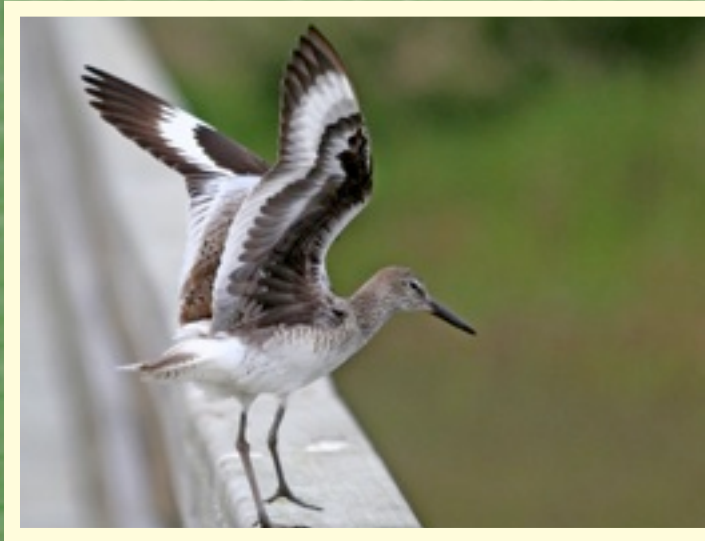


Harbor Island, Naturally

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WILLETS

A PLAIN SHOREBIRD, UNTIL THEY FLY

Willetts (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*) are drab birds at first sight, but when they take off



they expose their striking black and white wing markings.

PHOTOS BY JOHN ALBERT

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Once heavily depleted by hunters, they are now abundant in S.C. These birds eat insects, crustaceans, crabs and marine worms.

A Willet hunts by stalking the shoreline, marsh and shallow ponds, probing with its long bill or picking food out of the water.

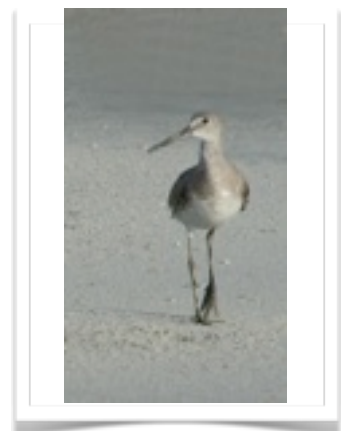
Nests are shallow scrapes in the ground covered with bent grass then lined with finer grasses. Four or five gray to buff eggs are laid. Both parents tend the nest. The male is usually on the nest at night. Incubation is 22-29 days. The young leave the nest the day after hatching. They find all their own food.



After 2 or 3 weeks the female leaves. The male remains to raise the young.

Seen all year round many more are here during the winter. The S.C. coast is the wintering ground for many birds from the Great Plains.

Have a Happy Holiday Season.



Sources: Kenn Kaufman [Lives of Norrth American Birds](#) 1996