


INVASIVE SPECIES

All cards with a **hashed red border**  are for invasive species.

All cards with a **wavy green border**  are for native species of interest.



What is an invasive species?

A living thing that is not native to an ecosystem and causes harm

Why are invasive species a problem?

- Grow and reproduce quickly and spread aggressively
- No natural predators
- Compete for food and habitat with native species
- Can damage plants, animals, the environment and/or the economy

Adventure with a Purpose!

Paddle for science by reporting sightings and sending photos of species to the following sites:

- Report an invasive species: **EDDMapS.org**
- Need help identifying a species? Check out: **iNaturalist.org**

What should I do if I find an invasive species?

- Leave it alone. It can be easy to confuse natives for non-natives.
- Avoid breaking plants to not accidentally transport them to new areas by your boat or in currents.



What is Paddle the Gulf?

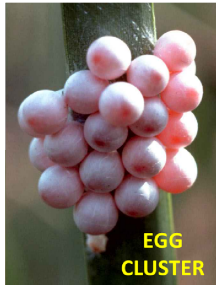
Paddle the Gulf is an initiative to educate the public about Gulf of Mexico coastal resources and promote stewardship through citizen science and the establishment of a network of coastal paddle trails, also known as blueways, across the five U.S. Gulf States.

Visit paddlethegulf.org to learn more!



Channeled Apple Snail (Golden Apple Snail)

Pomacea canaliculata



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Channeled Apple Snail (Golden Apple Snail)

Pomacea canaliculata

What to look for:

- Large freshwater snail with 5-6 whorls
- Grow 3-8 inches
- Lay clusters of pink eggs above water on plants

Importance:

- Consume many types of aquatic plants
- Lack of natural predators in the Gulf of Mexico system
- Rapid and profuse reproduction



No copyright infringement is intended

Water Hyacinth

Eichhornia crassipes



No copyright infringement is intended

Water Hyacinth

Eichhornia crassipes

What to look for:

- Free floating, interlocking aquatic plants
- Lavender flowers with yellow blotches
- Feathery roots that are purple-black and free hanging in water

Importance:

- Hazardous to navigation and swimming
- Floating mats reduce water flow leading to flooding and soil erosion



No copyright infringement is intended

Eurasian watermilfoil

Myriophyllum spicatum



No copyright infringement is intended

Eurasian watermilfoil

Myriophyllum spicatum

What to look for:

- Submerged, rooted plant
- Feather-like leaves arranged in a whorl (radiating from a single point) around the stem
- Stem can be white or red

Importance:

- Large, tangled mats of vegetation can limit boating, fishing and swimming
- Reduced water flow can limit the amount of light available to native species leading to fewer fish species



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Giant Salvinia (Floating Fern)

Salvinia molesta



No copyright infringement is intended

Giant Salvinia (Floating Fern)

Salvinia molesta

What to look for:

- Free floating- stems have no roots
- Leaves are in threes and lower leaf surface is hairy
- Common salvinia, *S. minima*, looks similar

Importance:

- Slows water flow and disrupts fishing, boating and hydro-electricity generation
- Responsible for wetland and habitat loss



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Native Species of Interest

The Gulf of Mexico's unique coastal ecosystems are home to a diversity of organisms. Some species in the area are of interest to scientists because they are rare or at risk. The following native species on cards with the green wavy border are of particular interest in your area. Be on the lookout and report sightings to the appropriate website or app!



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Did you find an interesting plant or animal and are not sure what it is?

Check out and share your photo at **iNaturalist.org** to help identify it. This site helps you identify species by connecting you to an online community of naturalists. Record your observations, get help with identification and learn from an online social network of people sharing biodiversity information.



Seaside Sparrow *Ammospiza maritima*



Top: adult
Left: juvenile



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Seaside Sparrow *Ammospiza maritima*

What to look for:

- Gray back and contrasting white throat
- Yellow in front of eye
- Longer bill than other sparrows

Importance:

- Found in salt marshes with tall grass but at risk from the decline in coastal habitat
- Closely related to Cape Sable and Atlantic seaside sparrows

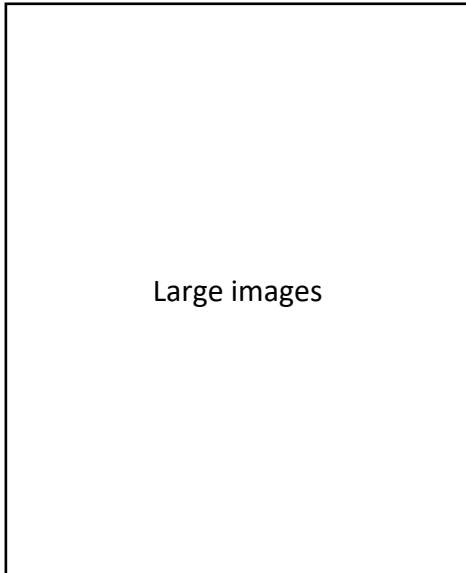
What should I do if I find one?

Report sightings using eBird.org or iNaturalist.org.



Common name

Latin name



Large images



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Common name

Latin name

What to look for:

- Bullet 1
- Bullet 2
- Bullet 3

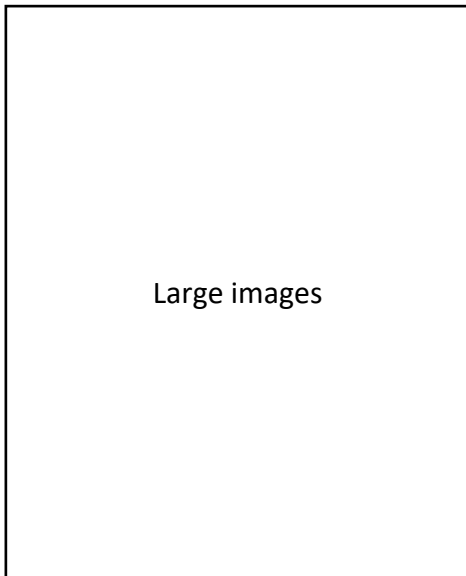
Importance:

- Key fact 1
- Key fact 2
- Key fact 3



Common name

Latin name



Large images



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Common name

Latin name

What to look for:

- Bullet 1
- Bullet 2
- Bullet 3

Importance:

- Key fact 1
- Key fact 2
- Key fact 3

