

ENDANGERED GULF COAST MARINE ANIMALS

Rice Whale:

Endangered Status: Endangered

Habitat: Offshore and Deep Sea

Population: Estimated to be fewer than 100 individuals

Threats: Vessel strikes, underwater noise, entanglement in fishing gear, and oil pollution



(Source from: [NOAA](#))



Sperm Whale:

Endangered Status: Endangered

Habitat: Coastal and shelf waters, rarely seen in the Gulf

Population: Estimated to be 300,000

Threats: Vessel strikes, entanglement in fishing gear, underwater noise, and habitat degradation

(Source from: [NOAA](#))

Manatee:

Endangered Status: Threatened

Habitat: Warm coastal waters, canals, and estuaries

Population: Estimated 8,350 individuals

Threats: Vessel strikes, habitat degradation, and climate change



(Source from: [SPAW-RAC](#))



Giant Manta Ray:

Endangered Status: Threatened

Habitat: Tropical and subtropical waters sometimes seen in the gulf.

Population: Not assessed

Threats: Vessel strikes, bycatch, entanglement, and pollution

(Source from: [NOAA](#))



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ENDANGERED GULF COAST MARINE ANIMALS

Hawksbill Sea Turtle:

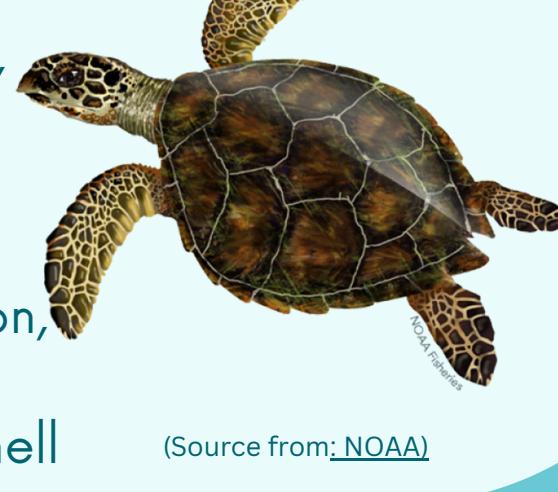
Endangered Status: Endangered

Habitat: Subtropical and tropical oceans,

favoring coastal areas

Population: Only about 8,000 nesting females

Threats: Vessel strikes, habitat degradation, pollution, climate change, fishing entanglement, and illegal trade of their shell



(Source from: [NOAA](#))

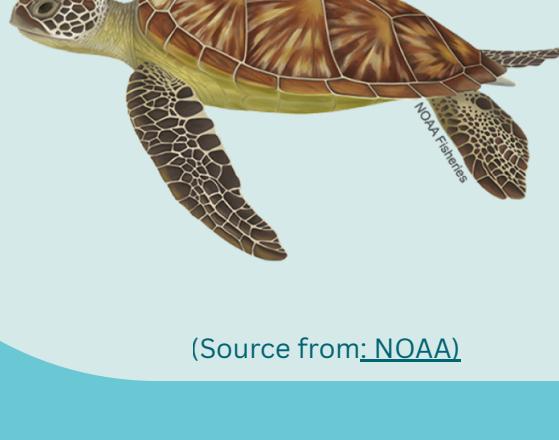
Green Sea Turtle:

Endangered Status: Threatened

Habitat: Subtropical and tropical oceans, favoring coastal areas and bays

Population: Varies throughout the world

Threats: Vessel strikes, habitat degradation, pollution, and climate change



(Source from: [NOAA](#))

Loggerhead Sea Turtle:

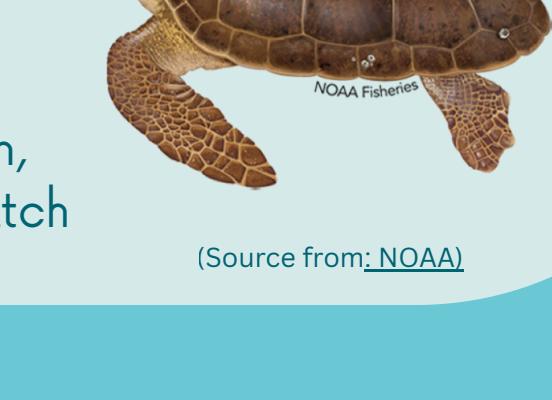
Endangered Status: Threatened

Habitat: Coastal areas, bays, estuaries, and

open ocean

Population: Only about 50,000 nesting females

Threats: Vessel strikes, habitat degradation, pollution, climate change, and fishing bycatch



(Source from: [NOAA](#))

Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle:

Endangered Status: Endangered

Habitat: Adults prefer near shore waters, young prefer open ocean

Population: Only about 8,000 nesting females

Threats: Vessel strikes, habitat degradation, pollution, climate change, and fishing bycatch especially shrimp trawls



(Source from: [NOAA](#))



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Report Endangered Marine Wildlife

Sightings!



(Photo from [SeeTurtles](#))



(Photo from [The Guardian](#))

For Endangered/Threatened Marine Animal Sighting contact the following:

- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- Port of Corpus Christi
- Whale Alert app
- Manatee Report app

(To contact above sources use links below)

For Sea Turtle that is nesting or stranded onshore sighting contact the following:

- Padre Island National Seashore
- Texas Sealife Center
- Texas State Aquarium
- TURTAPP

(To contact above sources use links below)



[Whale Alert App](#)



[Manatee Report App](#)



[TURTAPP](#)



[Texas Sealife Center](#)



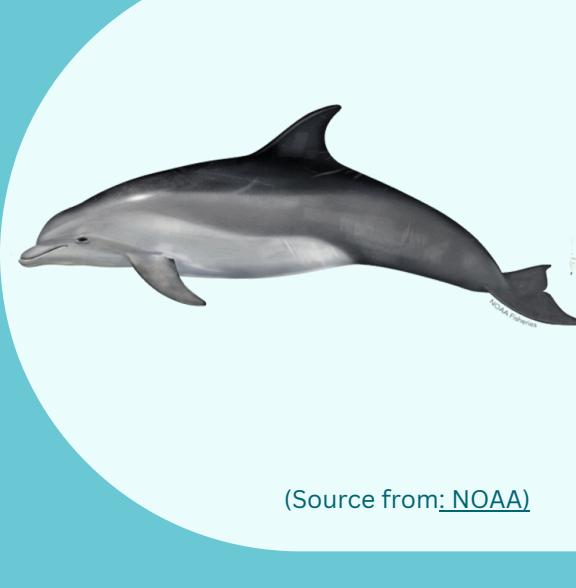
[Texas State Aquarium](#)



[NOAA](#)

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GULF COAST MARINE ANIMALS TO BE WATCHFUL FOR:



(Source from: [NOAA](#))

Bottlenose Dolphin:

Habitat: Tropical and temperate coastal waters worldwide, including bays and estuaries

Population: Around 600,000 individuals

Threats: Fishing gear entanglement, habitat degradation, pollution, vessel strikes, and underwater noise



(Figure from: [etsy](#))

(Source from: [Texas Parks and Wildlife](#))

Lionfish:

Invasive species of the Gulf

Habitat: Warm marine waters with rocky structures like oyster reefs

Sightings: Increased sightings in the last year

Problem: Decimate native fish populations and damage coral reef systems

Report Injured or Invasive Marine Wildlife Sightings!

For Injured or entangled wildlife report to contact the following:

- Texas Sealife Center
- Texas State Aquarium
- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

For Invasive Lionfish sighting contact the following:

- Texas Parks and Wildlife

(To contact above sources use links below)



(Photo from: [ceylonfirst](#))



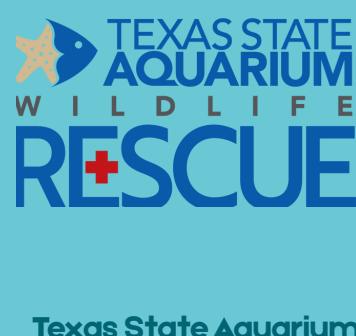
(Photo from: [YouTube](#))



[Texas Parks and Wildlife](#)



[Texas Sealife Center](#)



[Texas State Aquarium](#)



[NOAA](#)



Protect our Oceans, Sail

Smart!



(Figure from: [Floridaadventuresandrentals](#))

Boating Guidelines: Protect Marine Life & Avoid Fines

Responsible Boating Tips:

- Stay 100 yards (300 ft) from marine life.
- For Sperm Whales, stay 500 yards (1500 ft) away (required by law).

- Limit viewing to 30 minutes max.
- If animals approach, slow down and shift to neutral.
- Never touch or assist injured animals—report sightings and location.

(Source from: [Sailors For the Sea & NOAA](#))

Fines & Penalties:

Federal Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA):

- No harassing, hunting, capturing, or injuring marine mammals.
- Fines up to \$36,498, up to 1 year in prison, vessel may be seized.

Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA):

- No harming or disturbing endangered/threatened species.
- Civil fines- \$500–\$25,000; criminal fines up to \$50,000 and/or jail; equipment may be confiscated.

Texas Law:

- Harassing wild dolphins-up to \$100,000 fine and/or jail time.

(Source from: [TexasFishWildlife](#))



(Figure from: [NOAA](#))

See a Spout? Watch Out!



(Figure from: [seeaspout](#))

Visit these Boating sites for more information/training on proper boating!

[Flatsworthy](#)
[Texas Parks and Wildlife](#)
[Freedom Boat Club](#)



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Protect our Oceans, Leave

No Trace!



(Figure from: [wikimedia](#))



(Figure from: [TRELLIS](#))

Keep Our Coasts Clean: Protect Wildlife, Water, & Safety

On the Beach:

- Take all trash with you ("pack it in, pack it out").
- Use designated trash/recycling bins.
- Secure loose items (bags, wrappers, napkins).
- Join or host beach cleanups.

(Source from: [epa](#))

On the Water:

- Never toss trash overboard—bring a trash bag.
- Skip single-use plastics; use reusables.
- Choose eco-friendly sunscreen.
- Dispose of fishing lines/gear properly to protect wildlife.

(Source from: [marinebiodiversity](#))



(Figure from: [USAtoday](#))



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