

Gulf of Mexico Drainage



Common Loon (*Gavia immer*)

- 5 points – I am threatened by poisons that get into the food chain when fossil fuels are burned or when I eat lead sinkers lost by anglers, and by boaters who disturb my nests.
- 4 points – I spend summers on quiet Canadian lakes and winters near shore on the Gulf of Mexico.
- 3 points – I am a fish-eating bird who can stay underwater for a minute or more.
- 2 points – I am famous for my haunting “call of the wild.”
- 1 point – (Show picture)

“Life Lines”: When boating, watch for and avoid loon nesting areas. Minimize your use of fossil fuels. Don’t fish with lead sinkers.



Whooping Crane (*Grus americana*)

- 5 points – I am threatened by a lack of coastal marshes for my winter habitat and by oil spills in the Gulf of Mexico.
- 4 points – I breed in Canadian Arctic wetlands in summer and migrate to coastal marshes in Texas, stopping at wetlands along the way.
- 3 points – I stand 1.5 metres tall, with a wingspan of 2.5 metres.
- 2 points – I am a very rare bird; there are only about 200 of us remaining in the wild. An oil spill in the Gulf could wipe us out.
- 1 point – (Show picture)

“Life Lines”: Conserve energy and reduce the demand for petroleum.



Shrimp

- 5 points – The main threat to my survival is destruction of coastal marshes and pollution from sewage and chemicals.
- 4 points – I am a small crustacean that grows up in coastal marshes and estuaries before moving off-shore as an adult.
- 3 points – I am an important and popular sea food item for humans.
- 2 points – My name has become a synonym for “small.”
- 1 point – (Show picture)

“Life Lines”: Dispose properly of hazardous wastes. Encourage cities to treat sewage properly. Protect shoreline habitats.



Sperm Whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*)

- 5 points – New threats to my survival are chemical pollution and loud, underwater noise pollution from ships and undersea oil exploration. (Noise impairs my ability to communicate and use my sonar.)
- 4 points – I am an endangered marine mammal, once over-hunted by humans.
- 3 points – I dive deep and long (up to two hours), using sonar to locate giant squid and octopus.
- 2 points – I have a huge head, containing the “spermaceti” organ for which I am named.
- 1 point – (Show picture)

“Life Lines”: Conserve petroleum resources. Reduce chemical pollution from home.



Loggerhead Turtle (*Caretta caretta*)

- 5 points – My survival is threatened by accidental drowning in shrimp nets and by choking on marine litter that I mistake for food.
- 4 points – I may be slow, but I can travel up to 12,000 kilometres a year between nesting sites and feeding grounds.
- 3 points – I am a large, ocean-going reptile, who eats shrimp, jellyfish, horseshoe crabs, and molluscs.
- 2 points – My name is derived from my large, block-like head and short neck.
- 1 point – (Show picture)

“Life Lines”: Always pick up litter. Write letters to support turtle-friendly shrimp-fishing practices.



Seagrass (*Thalassia sp.*)

- 5 points – I am threatened by human developments along ocean coasts and by diseases brought on by long-term warming of the oceans.
- 4 points – By forming coastal marshes, I provide habitat for many other species of wildlife such as shrimps, fish, and birds.
- 3 points – I also protect sandy shorelines from erosion.
- 2 points – My leaves are blade-like and create a “saltwater meadow.”
- 1 point – (Show picture)

“Life Lines”: Protect ocean shorelines. Conserve energy, especially petroleum—don’t contribute to global climate change.