

## FACT SHEET:

### Focal Species and Associated Habitats for the Gulf Coast Prairie Landscape Conservation Cooperative

Developing and integrating the best available science into today's conservation work is essential to effectively address the complexities of modern-day landscape ecology and the uncertainty of highly variable climate conditions. This is the key role of Landscape Conservation Cooperatives.



*The American oyster, a Gulf Coast Prairie LCC focal species, lives in tidal marshes along the Gulf of Mexico. Credit: LPWD*

Gulf Coast Prairie LCC partners and other stakeholders went through an extensive process to evaluate their collective science needs and develop a comprehensive science strategy to help address them.

One of the important steps in this process was identifying 28 “focal species” that inhabit the LCC geographic area. LCC science projects that benefit focal species are given priority. Focal species are sometimes called “indicator species,” “representative species,” or “surrogate species.” Whatever the terminology used, the purpose is the same: to identify species that will receive special attention. This is because ensuring their health is most likely to result in productive habitats and healthy ecosystems that can support self-sustaining populations of a much broader array of wildlife.

Similarly, Gulf Coast Prairie Landscape Conservation Cooperative partners also defined 17 associated habitats that support focal species and many other natural and cultural resources within the LCC landscape. These are broadly defined and meant to help partners align species and habitat needs, communicate about conservation work, and direct science resources.

### Focal Species

The focal species for the Gulf Coast Prairie Landscape Conservation Cooperative are:

- Alligator Gar
- American Oyster
- Black-capped Vireo
- Black Skimmer
- Blue Crab
- Brazilian (Mexican) Free-tailed Bat
- Broadcast-spawning Prairie Minnow
- Brown Pelican
- Crawfish Frog
- Diamond-backed Terrapin
- Dionda spp.
- Eastern Meadowlark
- Eurycea spp. (Salamanders)
- Golden-cheeked Warbler



*The northern bobwhite is a Gulf Coast Prairie LCC focal species. It ranges throughout the eastern and midwestern United States and eastern Mexico, but has declined by as much as 90 percent in some areas. Credit: USFWS*

- Guadalupe Bass
- Gulf Menhaden
- Little Blue Heron
- Mottled Duck
- Northern Bobwhite
- Northern Pintail
- Penaeid Shrimp
- *Quadrula* spp.
- Rafinesque's Big-eared Bat
- Red-billed Pigeon
- River Prawn
- Sea Turtles
- White Bass
- White-tipped Dove



*The official state fish of Texas and a popular sportfish, the Guadalupe bass is found only in that state. It is a Gulf Coast Prairie LCC focal species. Credit: TPWD*

## Associated Habitats

The associated habitats that support Gulf Coast Prairie Landscape Conservation Cooperative focal species are:

- Agricultural lands
- Aquifers, springs, and spring-runs
- Barrier islands and beaches
- Caves
- Floodplain forests, swamps, and riparian systems
- Freshwater (non-forested) wetlands
- Headwaters and streams
- Mixed deciduous and juniper woodlands
- Nearshore Gulf systems
- Oak hardwood and pine forests
- Open bay systems
- Reservoirs
- Rivers and lakes
- Semi-desert shrub and grassland
- Shrubland and shortgrass (mixedgrass) prairie
- Tallgrass prairie
- Tidal wetlands



*The ecology of central Texas' Edwards Plateau is rapidly changing, prompting Gulf Coast Prairie LCC partners to develop science for improving conservation efforts. The area hosts several LCC focal species, including *Eurycea* salamanders, golden-cheeked warblers, and Brazilian (Mexican) free-tailed bats. Credit: TPWD*

*Gulf Coast Prairie Landscape Conservation Cooperative  
brings people and resources together for strategic advantage,  
strengthening our collective impact  
on the lasting protection of our natural world.*