

Habitats and Biota of the Gulf of Mexico: Before the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill: Volume 2: Fish Resources, Fisheries, Sea Turtles, Avian Resources, Marine Mammals, Diseases and Mortalities

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This book focuses on environmental conditions and the health of the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem prior to the April, 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. The different primary biotic and abiotic compartments that comprise the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem are reviewed. Experts in their respective scientific fields summarize the considerable body of available information describing sediment and water contaminants that influence habitat quality in the Gulf of Mexico. The ecological role of natural oil and gas seeps in Gulf energetics and species diversity is analyzed. A major focus of this book is on the evolution, productivity, dynamics and endangered status of coastal habitats. Plankton and benthic communities and factors that influence their productivity are described in relation to overall energy capture in the Gulf. Shellfish and fish resources and their recreational and commercial productivity are reviewed with historical perspective. Final chapters present the status of avian, sea turtle and marine mammal resources. The abundance and distribution of different species of birds, fishes, marine mammals, and sea turtles in the Gulf and the man-made and natural influences that contributed to their overall status prior to the oil spill are analyzed. The final chapter directly addresses and illustrates natural and oil induced diseases of fish and shellfish in the Gulf of Mexico before the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Throughout the volume the focus is on the combined influences of different human and natural factors that helped shape the biological, chemical, and ecological conditions that existed in the Gulf of Mexico before the Deepwater Horizon event.



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