



GSL GRUNT

Promoting Conservation in the Gulf of Mexico

Love is in the Air... and the Water!

February is the month of love. While we celebrate Valentine's Day, the Gulf Coast's wildlife is also busy with its own display of romance! Many coastal species form special bonds. Some just for the season and others for life. These relationships are important in keeping our ecosystem healthy and populated. One example is the Brown Pelican. During mating season these birds bond by exchanging items such as sticks and performing romantic dances before building their nest together. Once paired, both parents share the job of protecting the eggs and feeding their young. The Gulf Seahorse is another example of love in the Gulf. It is an unusual display of romance as the male takes the main role in reproduction. After a romantic dance, the female seahorse gives her eggs to the male. He carries the eggs in his pouch and nurtures them until they hatch. This rare example of male pregnancy is one of nature's most interesting love stories! This month let's celebrate the love stories of the Gulf by documenting bonded species on GulfSeeLife. Whether it is two birds nesting on a tree or seahorses dancing, every observation helps us better understand and protect the rich biodiversity of our coast. Happy Valentine's Day, and happy observing!



PHOTO OF ROYAL TERNS AND BROWN PELICANS BY
GSL USERS LANEY NUTE & KAYLEIGH MAZARIEGOS

New Species Additions:

**THANKS TO YOUR
OBSERVATIONS WE'VE
ADDED THE
FOLLOWING SPECIES:**

PLANTS:

- SALTMARSH MALLOW
- SHOWY RATTLEBOX
- SHORTLEAF FIG
- CAMPHORWEED
- STRAW-COLORED
FLATSEDE



Most Popular Observation:

A Shore full of Flathead Gray Mullet was spotted by Robert Gruba on an island near Mississippi on January 29th. The observation was classified as research grade, contributing valuable data to our understanding of local wildlife. The Flathead Gray Mullet (*Mugil cephalus*) is a fast-swimming fish found in coastal waters, estuaries, and rivers. They play an important role in marine ecosystems by eating debris and algae and helping maintain water quality. Mullet are known for their impressive jumping ability and seasonal migrations. They are an important species in commercial and recreational fisheries because of their lean, nutritious meat and roe. Thank you, Robert, for your well-liked contribution to GulfSeeLife!



Historic Coastal Snowfall:

This winter season has brought a rare and historic level of snowfall to the Gulf Coast. Just a few weeks ago the snow turned our warm coastlines into a freezing winter wonderland. Snow is uncommon in our region making this a special opportunity to see and learn how wildlife responds to the change in surroundings. Have you spotted any wildlife in the snowy weather? Currently, there are no recorded observations of wildlife in the snow on GulfSeeLife. Be the first to share yours! Upload your sightings and help us document this historic event.

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GRAYSON HOLLEY

