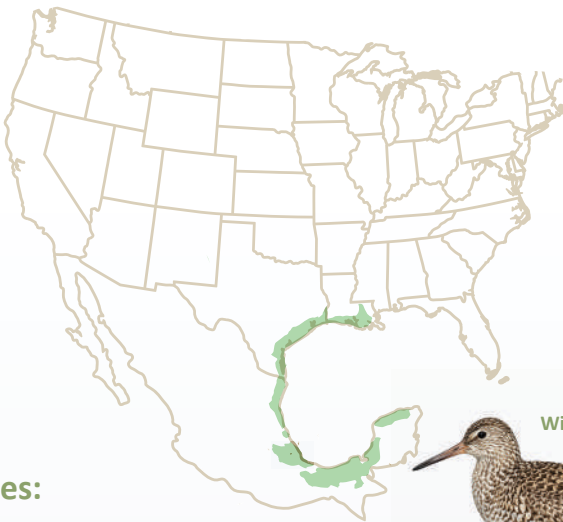




MIDCONTINENT SHOREBIRD CONSERVATION INITIATIVE (MSCI)

FACT SHEET – Gulf of Mexico Coastal Plain Planning Unit

GEOGRAPHY



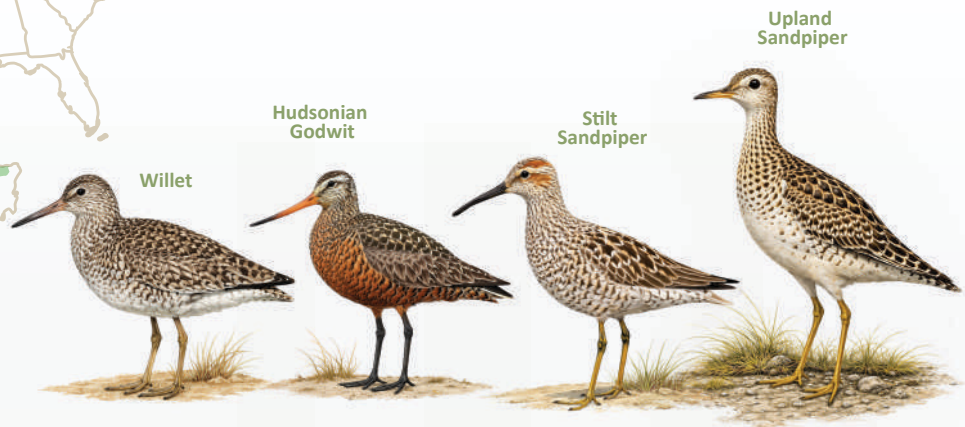
Countries:

- United States
- Mexico

Major landscapes: Gulf Coastal Prairie, Tamaulipan Coastal Wetlands

Main habitats: Barrier islands, beaches, spits, and coastal lagoons, agricultural lands, coastal marshes, tidal flats, brackish lagoons, estuarine sand flats, dunes, mangrove forests

Other characteristics: It is the only marine coastal region in the Midcontinent Americas Flyway



Least Sandpiper
©Maina Handmaker



Lesser Yellowlegs
©Brad Winn



Whimbrel
@Brad Winn



Red Knot
@Brad Winn

TARGET / KEY SPECIES

Wilson's Plover, Snowy Plover, Piping Plover, Red Knot, Western Sandpiper, Upland Sandpiper, Whimbrel, Willet, Hudsonian Godwit, Pectoral Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Long-billed Dowitcher, Lesser Yellowlegs.



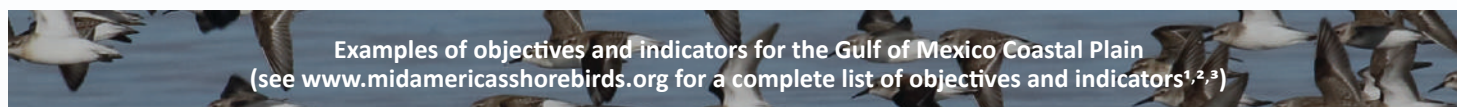
MAIN THREATS

This list reflects the highest-ranked threats identified for this planning unit. However, it does not encompass all threats affecting the unit. For a comprehensive assessment of threats and their relative importance, please refer to pages 24–36 of the MSCI Strategic Framework.

Threat Ranking in the Gulf of Mexico Coastal Plain		
Threat	Impacts	Rating
Climate change	Accelerating sea-level rise, increasing storm intensity, and altered precipitation regimes are driving rapid loss and degradation of coastal shorebird habitats. Coastal marshes, tidal flats, beaches, and barrier islands, are being submerged, eroded, or converted to open water. Climate-driven changes also disrupt the timing and availability of food resources and reduce habitat predictability.	Very High
Incompatible water management	Water management practices designed primarily for flood control, agriculture, and urban development, such as levees, channelization, drainage, and altered freshwater inflows, have reduced the extent, duration, and quality of shallow-water habitats. These interventions disrupt natural hydrological cycles that sustain coastal wetlands and estuarine systems, leading to habitat simplification, loss of invertebrate prey, and reduced suitability of managed wetlands and flooded agricultural fields.	High
Residential and commercial development	Rapid coastal development for housing, tourism, energy, and industrial infrastructure continues to fragment and permanently convert habitats. Construction on beaches, dunes, and coastal wetlands increases human disturbance and limits the ability of habitats to shift inland in response to sea-level rise.	High

PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND MAIN OBJECTIVES

To address the complex and interlinked threats affecting shorebirds and their habitats in the Gulf of Mexico Coastal Plain, the MSCI Strategic Framework identifies a set of complementary strategies that operate across scales and sectors. If you are implementing actions in this geography, please consider these indicators to monitor your progress towards achieving your results, and to better understand how you are contributing to implementing the MSCI Strategic Framework.



Examples of objectives and indicators for the Gulf of Mexico Coastal Plain
(see www.midamericasshorebirds.org for a complete list of objectives and indicators^{1,2,3})

Strategy: Manage existing and acquire new habitats¹

Objectives	Indicators
Decision and policymakers elevate and prioritize shorebird habitat conservation and management	Number of activities carried out to raise awareness among decision and policy makers about shorebird conservation (e.g., meetings, workshops)
Acquire lands that incorporate management and conservation actions for shorebirds	Area (e.g., hectares) of habitat acquired that incorporates management and conservation actions for shorebirds

Strategy: Integrate climate resiliency in conservation planning and implementation²

Prioritize conservation of critical sites/areas based on vulnerability to climate change	Number of sites identified as a priority for conservation based on its vulnerability to climate change
Integrate the effects of climate change in the management of the most vulnerable sites, including through nature-based solutions	Number of sites that have implemented nature-based solutions to increase climate resiliency

Strategy: Build capacity for conservation by raising awareness and boosting education and training³

Increase capacity of key stakeholders to implement conservation actions that are beneficial to shorebirds	Number of capacity-building activities conducted (on an annual basis)
Develop value propositions to increase endorsement of shorebird conservation by a wider range of actors	Number of times value propositions are used to promote shorebird conservation

1. More information on pages 48 and 50 of the MSCI Strategic Framework
2. More information on pages 57 and 59 of the MSCI Strategic Framework
3. More information on pages 60 and 63 of the MSCI Strategic Framework