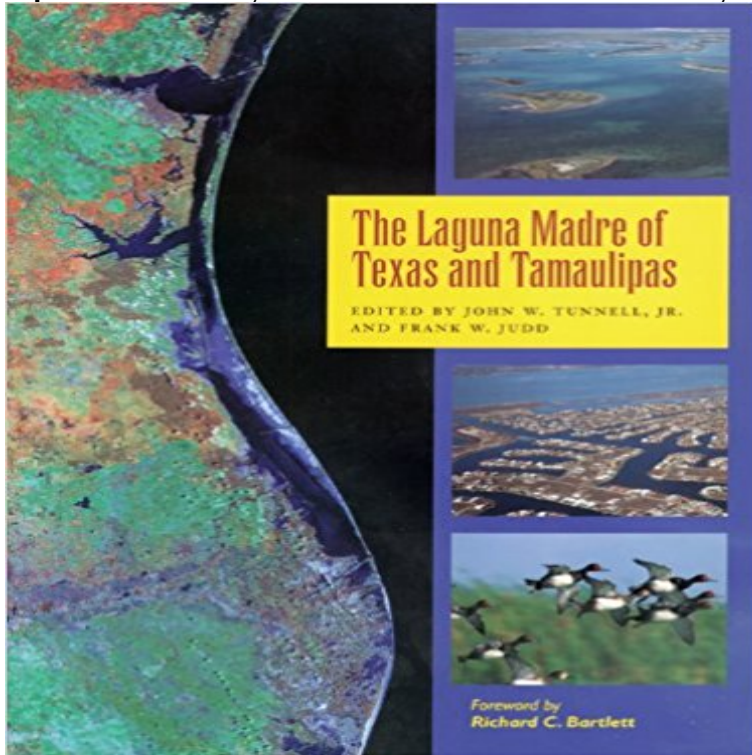


The Laguna Madre of Texas and Tamaulipas (Gulf Coast Books, sponsored by Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi)



The Laguna Madre of Texas and Tamaulipas is the only hypersaline coastal lagoon on the North American continent and only one of five worldwide. Extending along 277 miles of shoreline in South Texas and northeastern Mexico, the lagoon is renowned for its vast seagrass meadows, huge wintering redhead population, and bountiful fishing grounds. Recent concerns about increasing human activity have focused attention on the long-term health of the Laguna Madre as growing population pressures, pollution problems, and dredging threaten this unique ecosystem. The Nature Conservancy, whose mission is the conservation of biodiversity through protection of habitat, recognized the need to compile all known information about the Laguna Madre in order to move ahead with a science-based conservation agenda. This book is the result. Taking an ecosystem approach to the study of this rich habitat, the authors first provide an overview of the natural history of the Laguna Madre and adjacent areas, including an essay on the importance of the regions private ranches. Succeeding chapters discuss the diverse natural resources of the lagoon: seagrasses, open bays, tidal flats, barrier islands, abundant waterfowl, colonial waterbird rookeries, sea turtles, and fisheries. A final section identifies information gaps, offers a conservation framework, and makes recommendations for preserving the biodiversity of this complex and special ecosystem. Over seventy years of literature on the Laguna Madre and surrounding environments has been synthesized here. With 150 figures and illustrations, the book is the first to take a broad and comprehensive look at both the Texan and Tamaulipan Laguna Madre. For scientists, conservationists, resource managers, and policy makers involved in the future of the Texas and Mexico coasts, the value of this book is clear. And coastal residents,

birders, anglers, and nature lovers who want to learn about and take care of the Laguna Madre will find this to be an indispensable guide.

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