



## The Pascagoula River

The Pascagoula River Basin is Mississippi's second largest basin draining an area of about 9,600 square miles before emptying into the Gulf of Mexico. Major streams include the Pascagoula, Leaf, and Chickasawhay Rivers, as well as Black and Red Creeks. The Pascagoula River System is the last unregulated major river system in the lower 48 states.

The Pascagoula River Basin is heavily forested throughout the entire river basin. The central portion of the basin is known as the Pine Belt because the Basin's forests consist mostly of pine forests with scattered hardwoods. Near the Gulf Coast, drainage areas are low-lying flatlands, forested wetlands, and marshlands. Farther inland, the basin consists primarily of gently rolling hills and broad, flat floodplains. The majority of the streams are deep to moderately deep, fast flowing perennial streams. Stream conditions are natural or unmodified in appearance with clear water. Some streams are considered "blackwater" streams because they are stained by tannic acid leached from vegetation. There are also several urban areas in the basin near population centers such as Meridian, Laurel, Hattiesburg, and Pascagoula.

17 endangered or threatened species that find room to survive in the 50,000 acres of protected lands along the free-flowing river. Among them are the bald eagle and the yellow-blotched sawback turtle, which is found only in the Pascagoula or its tributaries. As with other members of the genus, this turtle, typically about five inches long, has been driven close to extinction from demand for it by collectors.

One creature that has survived with little change for at least 63 million years, according to fossil records, is the gulf sturgeon. Biologists call it an "anadromous" fish because it migrates from the oceans to fresh water or marshes for spawning. Reaching seven feet or more from its long snout to its swept-back tail, the sturgeon was fished almost to extinction for its prized roe and meat. Today, the fish is protected under the federal Endangered Species Act. Source: Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, Pascagoula River Basin Status Report, 2001

## The Pascagoula River Drawing by Joe Jewell 2010

### Fill in the blank

The Pascagoula River, also known as the \_\_\_\_\_ (*proper name*), has many different \_\_\_\_\_ (*noun*) types. Traveling down the river system, one can see pine forest, \_\_\_\_\_ (*noun*), blackwater creeks and \_\_\_\_\_ (*noun*). The Pascagoula River system is very large and is located in parts of \_\_\_\_\_ (*number*) counties with a small part extending into southwestern Alabama. The river is named for the \_\_\_\_\_ (*proper name*) tribe.

Major streams of the river system include the Pascagoula, Leaf and \_\_\_\_\_ (*proper name*) Rivers, as well as Black and \_\_\_\_\_ (*proper name*) Creeks. This river is the last unimpeded river system in the lower 48 states. It eventually empties into the \_\_\_\_\_ (*proper name*).

The river system is home to many different kinds of critters including \_\_\_\_\_ (*noun*), \_\_\_\_\_ (*noun*), \_\_\_\_\_ (*noun*), and \_\_\_\_\_ (*noun*). The number of migratory birds that use this river corridor every year is said to be \_\_\_\_\_ (*number*). One of these migratory birds is a raptor called a \_\_\_\_\_ (*proper name*), and it is easily identified by its scissor-like black tail.

### Words:

Habitat	cypress swamps	Water moccasin
327	tidal marsh	Alligator snapping turtle
Alligators	22	Pascagoula
Raccoons	Gulf of Mexico	Singing River
Clapper rails	Red	Gulf sturgeon
Rainbow snake	Swallowtailed kite	Chickasawhay



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Word Search: Words are across, down, diagonal, and backwards

SWALLOWTAILED	NATURE	RIVER
CYPRESS	WATER	QUIET
DARK	ORCHID	MARSH
STURGEON	SWAMP	FOREST
PINE	BEAR	TURTLE
ALLIGATOR	MOSQUITO	BIRDS

D O P L U M B I R D S L O F B S  
 S E T U R T L E O I P I F E T W  
 W O Z S W A M R R A T O A D N A  
 A R R T I L T V C Y P R E S S L  
 M S K A C O W H H I V E R O M L  
 P W M L S E E D I O N S T O Q O  
 A O A L C A O K D T R T T I L W  
 R R T I I M D A R K I I T T A T  
 A H U G E E E O U T F R E M S A  
 M A W A C R H E Q S E L I U N I  
 D B E T E R F S R C S F U I M L  
 I A W O C O W H O R Y R Q E F E  
 L K T R P L N O E G R U T S M D

WORD JUMBLE: Unscramble the letters.

1. RTILTE \_\_\_\_\_
2. ERNVOCSE \_\_\_\_\_
3. CERYLCE \_\_\_\_\_
4. EREVPERS \_\_\_\_\_
5. TURANAL CSEORURSE \_\_\_\_\_
6. NEMTRONIEVN \_\_\_\_\_
7. LUTOPLINO \_\_\_\_\_
8. ACELN WRATE \_\_\_\_\_
9. LCAEN RIA \_\_\_\_\_
10. HARTS \_\_\_\_\_

1. LITTER 2. CONSERVE 3. RECYCLE 4. PRESERVE 5. NATURAL RESOURCES  
 6. ENVIRONMENT 7. POLLUTION 8. CLEAN WATER 9. CLEAN AIR 10. TRASH