American Environmental and Natural History

American History · Answer Key · 20 Questions

1. Which bird species, once numbering in the billions, was declared extinct in 1914 following massive habitat loss and commercial hunting in the United States?

A) Passenger Pigeon
B) Carolina Parakeet
C) Heath Hen
D) Ivory-billed Woodpecker

2. The 1887 Dawes Act had the unintended environmental consequence of forcing Native American tribes to adopt what specific land-use practice?

A) Terrace farming
B) Slash-and-burn clearing
C) Private small-plot allotment
D) Hydroponic cultivation

3. What was the primary ecological impact of the 'Great Die-Off' of the American Bison in the late 19th century on the Great Plains?

A) Expansion of forests
B) Invasion of non-native grasses
C) Increased soil erosion and alteration of biodiversity
D) Global cooling effect

4. In 1903, Theodore Roosevelt established the first National Wildlife Refuge in the U.S. at Pelican Island to primarily protect what?

A) Brown Pelicans
B) Manatees
C) Sea Turtles
D) Bald Eagles

5. The 'Year Without a Summer' in 1816, which caused crop failures in the Northeastern U.S., was caused by the eruption of which volcano?

A) Mount St. Helens
B) Mount Tambora
C) Krakatoa
D) Mount Pelée

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6. Which invasive plant species was introduced to the American South in the 1870s for erosion control and ornamental shade, subsequently becoming an ecological plague?

A) Purple Loosestrife
B) Kudzu
C) Japanese Knotweed
D) Garlic Mustard

7. The 'Timber Culture Act of 1873' was an attempt by the U.S. government to encourage tree planting in what region?

A) The Appalachian Mountains
B) The Great Plains
C) The Pacific Northwest
D) The Florida Everglades

8. What was the primary driver for the near-extinction of the American Beaver in the early 19th century?

A) Disease
B) The North American Fur Trade
C) Agricultural expansion
D) Native population shifts

9. The 1935 Soil Conservation Act was passed in direct response to which environmental crisis?

A) The Great Mississippi Flood
B) The Dust Bowl
C) The Exxon Valdez spill
D) The Love Canal toxic waste incident

10. Which marine mammal species was the primary target of the New England whaling industry that peaked in the mid-19th century?

A) Blue Whale
B) Sperm Whale
C) Gray Whale
D) Humpback Whale

11. Which U.S. President signed the 'Lacey Act' in 1900, the nation's first federal law protecting wildlife by prohibiting trade in illegally taken fish and game?

A) William McKinley
B) Theodore Roosevelt
C) Grover Cleveland
D) Benjamin Harrison

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12. What was the main ecological reason for the introduction of the mongoose into Hawaii in 1883?

A) To control rats in sugarcane fields
B) To provide fur for trade
C) To replace native bird predators
D) To control invasive snake populations

13. The 1872 Yellowstone National Park Act was significant because it was the first time in U.S. history that what happened?

A) A federal law regulated private land
B) A forest was clear-cut for federal revenue
C) Land was set aside specifically for public park use by federal statute
D) A wildlife refuge was established for hunting

14. Which non-native bird was released in New York's Central Park in 1890 by Eugene Schieffelin in an attempt to introduce all birds mentioned in Shakespeare's works?

A) House Sparrow
B) European Starling
C) Common Pigeon
D) Ring-necked Pheasant

15. What catastrophic environmental event prompted the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1970?

A) The Santa Barbara oil spill of 1969
B) The Dust Bowl
C) The Great Smog of St. Louis
D) The 1906 San Francisco earthquake

16. The 'Bald Eagle Protection Act' was passed in 1940 primarily due to concern over:

A) Pesticide poisoning
B) Illegal poaching and habitat encroachment
C) Climate change
D) Overpopulation

17. In the 18th century, 'Bounty Acts' in various American colonies were established to incentivize the killing of what animal?

A) Wild turkeys
B) Eastern Cougars
C) Beavers
D) White-tailed deer

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18. Which river caught fire on multiple occasions due to industrial pollution, becoming a symbol for the need for the Clean Water Act?

A) Potomac River
B) Cuyahoga River
C) Hudson River
D) Mississippi River

19. The introduction of what crop in the 17th century profoundly altered the soil chemistry and ecosystems of the Chesapeake Bay region?

A) Corn
B) Tobacco
C) Wheat
D) Cotton

20. What was the ecological result of the 'Weeks Act' of 1911?

A) The federal purchase of land to protect the headwaters of navigable rivers
B) The banning of all pesticides
C) The establishment of the first national monument
D) The total cessation of coal mining

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