

Alabama's Coastal Cleanup

Get the Trash out of the Splash!

On Saturday, September 17, 2016, thousands of volunteers will descend on beaches, lakes, and streams of Alabama to remove trash and debris — on land and under the water. Volunteers of all ages will form the largest one-day volunteer event in the state on behalf of clean oceans and waterways — Alabama's Coastal Cleanup.

Pollution prevention is the key

Alabama's Coastal Cleanup isn't just about pollution cleanup — it's also about pollution prevention. The event focuses on educating and empowering people to become a part of the marine debris solution.

What makes the Alabama Coastal Cleanup unique is its data collection component. Volunteers record specific types of marine debris being found, allowing Ocean Conservancy, sponsor of the International Coastal Cleanup, to compile, analyze and track this data year-by-year and make discoveries about the behaviors that cause the debris.

The final information is used to educate the public, business, industry, and government officials about the problem. We believe understanding the problem is the key to finding long-lasting solutions.

The Alabama Coastal Cleanup is coordinated by



Over the past 28 years,...

--83,328 volunteers have participated in the Alabama Coastal Cleanup.

--5,223 miles of coastline have been cleaned.

--1,561,583 pounds of debris have been removed.



Marine debris is dangerous

Animals are harmed and killed by marine debris. They get tangled in discarded fishing gear, and they ingest debris that can kill them. For example, a plastic sandwich bag floating in the ocean may look like a jellyfish, a favorite food of sea turtles. If a sea turtle tries to eat the bag it could block its throat or remain in the stomach making the turtle feel full, leading to starvation and death. Ending marine debris will help us all protect marine-life.

Ten things you can do to help prevent marine debris

1. Join Alabama's 29th annual Coastal Cleanup on September 17th.
2. Clean up your trash, even when not near the water. It's amazing that a vast majority of trash in our waterways comes from land-based activities. Even trash discarded miles inland can make it to the ocean, carried by the rain and the winds.
3. Retrieve your monofilament fishing line. Don't leave fishing line in the water and remove others' when you find it... being careful not to tug on snagged lines that could be caught on important habitat below the surface. Also be aware of hooks that may be left on the line.
4. Contain and properly clean spills when boating. Use oil-absorbent rags or even diapers to clean spills. Ocean Conservancy's Good Mate program can provide you with plenty of tips for reducing impact when on the water.
5. Recycle used motor oil and oil filters. Your local gas station should have facilities for recycling these materials. Never pour oil, paint, antifreeze, or other household chemicals into an open sewer.
6. Better yet, find alternatives to household chemicals. Don't use fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides that can wash into open waters. Use lemon juice, vinegar, and baking soda for household cleaning.
7. Become a storm drain sentry. Stencil your local drains to remind people where the things they dump there end up... and of the potential consequences.
8. Use cloth bags for groceries. Take them with you when you shop to reduce the number of plastic bags you use. In addition to being ugly, plastic bags can choke marine wildlife when mistaken for food.
9. Properly dispose of used batteries and electronics. Use your local recycling center. Electronics leach harmful chemicals into the environment. Once there, these toxic pollutants can affect the environment for decades.
10. Contact your elected representatives. Let them know you care about the effects of marine debris and that you are watching what they do to stop it. Then, vote for candidates who support marine debris prevention and are good stewards of our ocean.

www.AlabamaCoastalCleanup.com

