

JOURNAL OF CITIZEN ACTION AGAINST BEACH LITTER



BEACH SWEEPS 25!

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PHOTO CREDIT: JOE REYNOLDS



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"A small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has".

Margaret Mead

Greetings Beach Sweepers and Friends of the Ocean!

You are the Ocean's first line of defense!

Congratulations and waves of thanks for 25 years of sweeping success. Nothing damped your spirit of ocean protection—neither rain, nor blasting winds, or freezing temperatures. From the earliest days we have collected, tallied, sorted, recycled, and rallied against the litter on our beaches. Over the years, you have brought your children to the Sweeps and now they bring their children. And though it has become a family tradition, it is one that we all work to end—that in the future our beaches will be litter free, naturally.

The fact is beaches, waterways, and the ocean are cleaner and healthier today thanks to you. Although we know more needs to be done; this is a time to reflect and celebrate your Citizen Action which has resulted in such success.

This Journal is a salute to you, our Beach Captains and Beach Sweepers. It provides an overview of the data collected, highlights past clean ups, identifies programs and laws that have resulted, and finally identifies actions needed.

We, the people, are responsible for pollution. Together, we can make a difference. Indeed we already have.

Enjoy the Journal. Enjoy the beach. Enjoy making the world better.

Ever onward,

Cindy Zipf
Executive Director



Sandy Hook Circa 1990

“10 Tips”: Things You Can Do to Stop Pointless Pollution

Clean Ocean Action’s 10 Tips for Daily Living



These cards teach people how they can minimize their contribution to the problem of non-point pollution or “pointless pollution.” The cards are available for municipalities, schools and businesses to reproduce and distribute. Cards can be downloaded from our website or ordered by phone/mail/email. Each “tip card” is designed to educate distinct groups of people such as:

- Kids
- Daily Living
- Cleaning
- For the Kitchen
- For the Beach
- Shore Visitors
- Lawn and Garden
- Drivers
- Boaters
- Smokers
- Personal Watercraft Operators
- Anglers
- Businesses?
- Energy Reduction?
- Party Planning?

Each summer, Clean Ocean Action volunteers hit the New Jersey shore to distribute these

“10 Tip” cards

to educate and motivate citizens as part of the Clean Ocean Action Shore Tips (C.O.A.S.T.) Campaign.

For a complete step-by-step guide on coordinating your own community beach sweep, please visit CleanOceanAction.org

Reduce, reuse, and recycle. Avoid using disposable items such as plastic straws, cups, water bottles and utensils. Use reusable bags, mugs and food containers. Recycle as much as possible. Download your music.

Conserve the drops to save water. Turn off the water while brushing teeth, take shorter showers, use low-flow faucets and showerheads, and choose a car wash that recycles water. Turn washing machine “load size” down a notch.

Flip the switch to save energy. Turn off your lights and appliances when not in use. Unplug your phone chargers and remote controlled appliances, which use energy even when they are not in use.

Don’t be idle. Turn off your car when idling for more than 30 seconds. This will conserve fuel, save money, and reduce pollution.

Shop wisely. Purchase environmentally responsible products, such as those made from recycled materials, nontoxic cleaners, and products with little packaging waste.

Swap bulbs and replace inefficient items in your home. Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL). Check www.earth911.org for more info and safe CFL disposal options. Buy “Energy Star” appliances.

Stash the trash responsibly. Never litter. Make sure outdoor trash cans are covered so trash does not blow out.

Be proactive. Write manufacturers and retailers to urge them to make and sell recyclable products, use minimal packaging and supply environmentally safe products.

Get involved. Attend town meetings and discuss your concerns with your local elected officials. Write to your elected officials about your environmental concerns. Join an environmental organization.

Spread the word and educate family, friends, neighbors and co-workers about how they can improve daily habits to protect our environment. Together, we are the solution.

Nonpoint source or “pointless” pollution is the number one cause of coastal water pollution. This pollution has many sources, including stormwater runoff that carries litter, pet waste, fertilizers, pesticides, soil, and waste from leaky sewage systems into waterways. Though people and their everyday habits are often the source of pollution, we can easily become the solution. By making small changes you can make our ocean fishable, swimmable, and healthy.

For more information, visit:

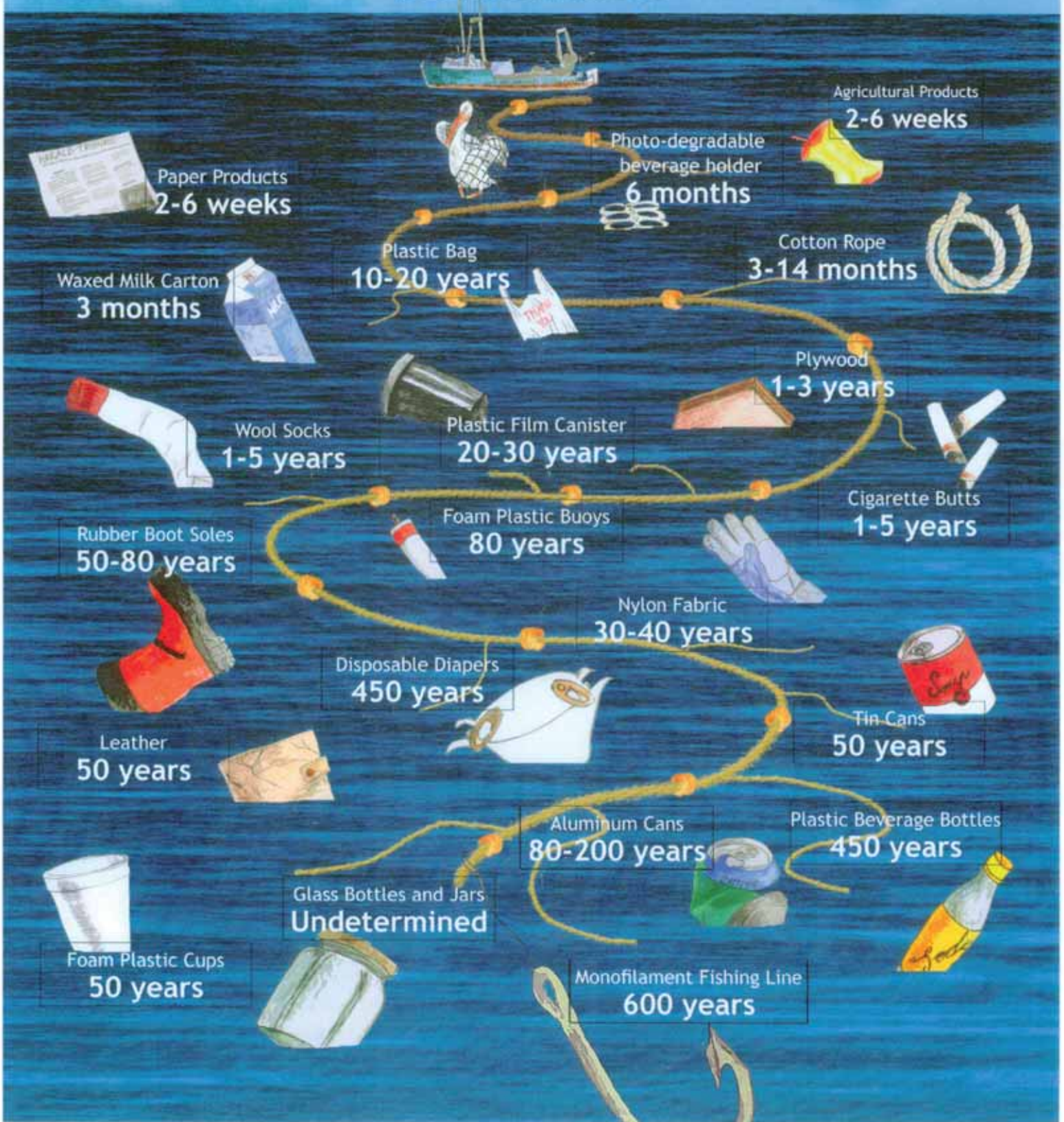
www.CleanOceanAction.org



PHOTO CREDIT: JOE REYNOLDS

Keep up the fight to save our seas! - Patricia Lyons

MARINE DEBRIS BIODEGRADATION TIME LINE



Sources: U.S. National Park Service; "Garbage in, garbage out", Audobon magazine, Sept./Oct. 1998 and Mote Marine Lab, Sarasota, FL.

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Due to the uncertainty of each item's individual composition and environmental exposure, the time lines quoted here are estimates.

Science Trends



Marine Debris. Human generated litter discarded on land and at sea ends up on our beaches and in our bays and oceans. Plastic is most abundant, about 80% of marine debris is plastic, and most damaging to marine life.



Underwater View of Floating Marine Debris in the Pacific Ocean

Plastic Manufacturing Continues to Increase. The global production of plastic has risen from about 1.5 million tons in 1950 to 100 million tons in 1989 to more than 260 million tons in 2009.

Sources of Marine Debris. Land sources account for the majority of marine debris which is blown or transported by water to the ocean. Large storm events and natural disasters, such as hurricanes and floods, can generate extensive marine debris. Sources include: litter, stormwater discharges, combined sewer overflows, landfills, illegal dumping, lost/discarded fishing gear, accidental shipping container spills and offshore oil/gas platforms.

When it rains more than a tenth to a quarter of an inch, Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) in the region release a combination of raw sewage and stormwater. NY has about 460 CSOs and NJ has 280. These CSOs, without controls, transport street debris as well as tampons, syringes and other items disposed in sewage to our waterways.



Combined Stormwater and Raw Sewage Overflows from New York City into the waterway PHOTO CREDIT: Kate Zidar

Where Does All the Garbage Go?

Marine debris is transported to surface waters, the seafloor, and onto shorelines. However little is known as to what percentage winds up where. Heavy items, such as certain types of fishing gear, glass objects and ship containers tend to sink and may be moved by currents. Although seafloor studies are limited, the density of seafloor marine debris tends to be higher in coastal areas near pollution sources than in the deep ocean. Plastic and other broken down pieces of debris also mix with organic matter in the ocean that slowly sink to the seafloor and accumulates.

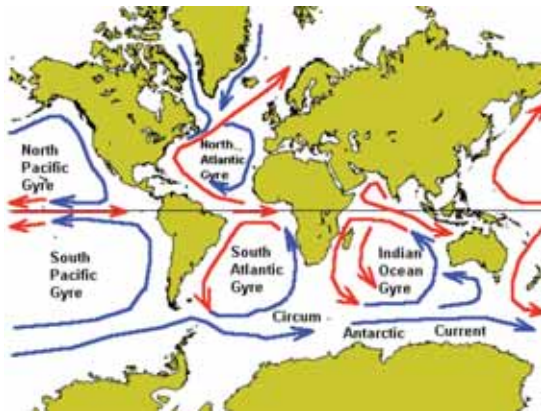
Due to its buoyancy, plastics make up the majority of floating marine debris in surface waters, which drift along the ocean currents, travelling thousands of miles and often concentrating in areas of convergence, such as, in the middle of "gyres".

What is a Gyre? The earth's rotation and winds drive surface ocean currents that form giant circulating loops, or gyres.

FACT: 90% of the garbage found in the North Pacific Gyre is plastic.

Why do Gyres Concentrate Marine Debris? Garbage and debris are caught up in these currents and physical forces

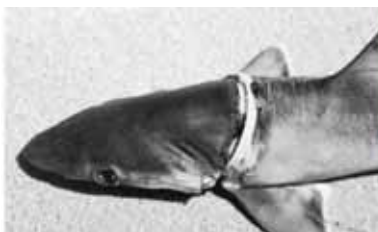
Science Trends



This diagram of the 5 Ocean Gyres shows warm water in red and cold water in blue. (Diagram from Dr. Steven Dutch, University of Wisconsin)

move trash toward the center resulting in the high concentration of garbage within the gyres. The first great ocean garbage patch was discovered in the North Pacific Gyre, and is reportedly twice the size of Texas (and growing). A recent expedition through the North-Atlantic Gyre revealed a similar “plastic soup” with debris floating throughout the water column.

What Happens to Plastic in the Ocean? Plastic persists and slowly breaks into smaller and smaller pieces. The Mote Marine Laboratory estimates degradation takes 600 years for monofilament fishing lines, 450 years for plastic beverage bottles and disposable diapers, and 10 to 20 years for plastic bags. The resulting plastic micro-particles are thought to remain in the marine environment for hundreds to thousands of years and may never fully breakdown.



a. Juvenile Brazilian Sharpnose Shark with plastic ring damaging the gills (from Sazima et al. 2002)



b. Sea turtle entangled in fishing line (from NOAA)

FACT: A plankton survey conducted off the Southern California coast found that after a storm event the mass of microplastics were 3 times higher than the mass of zooplankton.

What are the Impacts of Plastic Marine Debris? Plastic debris is not only ugly to look at and therefore detrimental to the coastal economy, but more importantly it is harmful and lethal to marine wildlife due to entanglement and ingestion.

Harms to Marine Life

Entanglement in items such as plastic bottle top rings, balloons and string, packing straps, and fishing net/line are serious threats to fish, turtles, mammals and birds. Mortality can occur quickly through drowning or predation or it can be a long agonizing death from starvation, infection or gradual strangulation. Younger, smaller organisms can become entangled in small plastic items that constrict as they grow, damaging tissue, hampering movement and/or restricting air or food passage and eventually leading to death and disease. The long life of plastics only makes things worse, as plastic items become freed after the entangled organism dies and decomposes, ready to be picked up by another victim. Lost or discarded fishing gear continues to capture and kill organisms until it is removed or finally sinks to the bottom.

Ingestion occurs when organisms mistake items such as plastic bags, balloons, plastic fragments and nurdles for



All of the plastic debris in the blue bin came from this Laysan Albatross chick. (photo from NOAA)

natural food items. Ingested plastic items can block or damage the digestive system leading to infection or starvation. A stomach full of plastic makes the animal feel

Science Trends



full, causing them to stop feeding even though they have not eaten the energy or nutrients they need. Worse yet, studies have shown that organic contaminants like PCBs concentrate on the surface of plastic pieces, exposing wildlife to elevated levels of these toxic chemicals when ingested. Since plastic does not break down in the stomach, plastic and toxins are transferred up the food web when the organism is consumed.

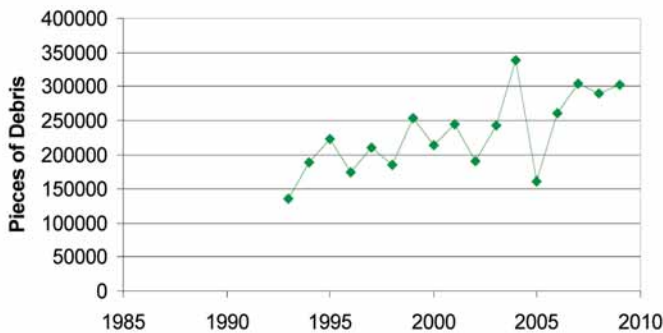
trash according to trash type. In 1988, data cards were introduced as part of a national assessment of pollution of beaches by the Center of Marine Conservation based in Washington, D.C. In 1993, COA collected data from beaches statewide for both the spring and fall sweeps. A summary report was presented at the first International Coastal Cleanup Conference held in D.C. in 1994. In 2003, 2005, and again in 2009, new revised data cards were used. For analyzing trends, the statewide data from 1993 to 2009 was focused on.

Trends in Data Collected from New Jersey Beach Sweeps

Beach Sweep Volunteer Data Collection. In the mid-eighties, COA's "Trash Attack" volunteers began collecting

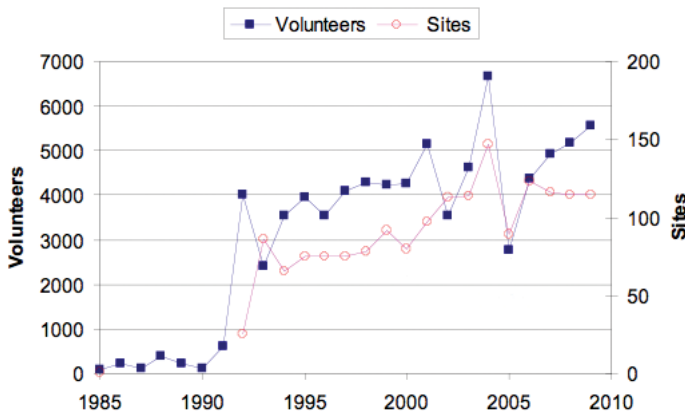
Beach Sweep Trends for New Jersey. Pollution changes over time. New materials become available, products that people buy change and efforts to reduce pollution are made. The beach sweeps data capture some of these trends.

Figure 1. Increase in Pieces of Debris Collected



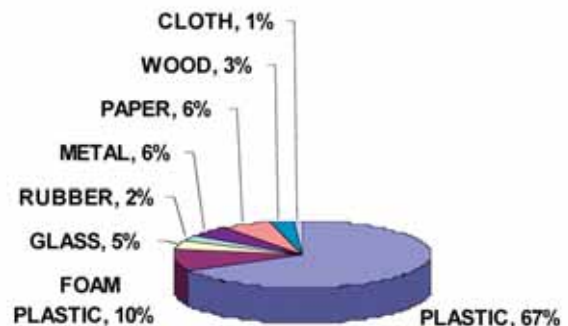
There has been an overall increase in the number of pieces of trash collected over the history of the beach sweeps, due in part to increases in the number of volunteers and number of sites cleaned up (Figure 1). The numbers of volunteers and sweep sites have been affected by large storms which created unsafe conditions, notably in 2000, 2002, and 2005 (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Volunteers and Sites Increase (2002 & 2005 are rain events)



Debris Size Reduced. When the beach sweeps began, larger debris items were more commonly observed and removed than in recent sweeps.

Figure 3. 1993-2009 Total Items – Percentage of Material Types





Science Trends

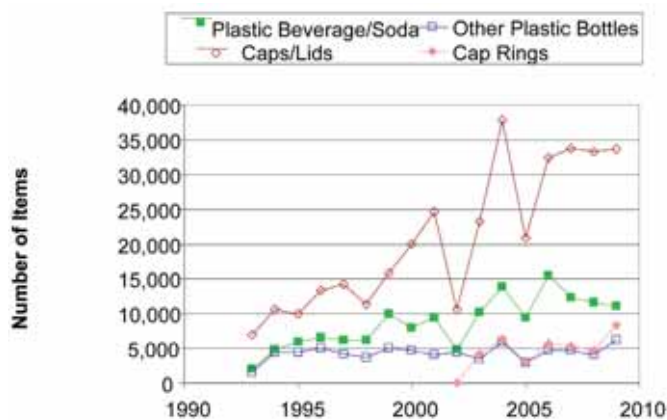
Plastic, the Primary Trash Type. Plastic and plastic foam compose 77% of the total items that were collected from 1993 to 2009 (Figure 3). The amount of plastic pieces collected has generally increased from 71% in 1993 to 80% in 2009.

In contrast, the relative percentages of glass and paper both declined from about 8.2% in 1993 to 3.7% and 4%, respectively, in 2009. The amount of cloth and rubber items increased over this time.

Plastic Bags Blow. The number of bags collected more than quadrupled from 2,793 in 1993 to 12,873 in 2009.

Plastic Bottles Replace Aluminum Cans and Glass Bottles. When the beach sweeps started, beverage containers tended to be glass bottles or metal cans, and pull-tabs and plastic 6-pack holder rings were commonplace. In 1988, 52 paper bags of plastic 6-pack holders were collected from the spring sweep at Sandy Hook. In 2009, only 348 6-pack holders were collected for both the spring and fall sweeps statewide. Six-pack holders have dramatically declined, as they have been replaced by cardboard boxes for packaging. However since the 1980's, the amount of plastic beverage containers has increased greatly and is reflected in the sweeps data (Figure 4). Plastic bottle caps and cap rings have also risen.

Figure 4. Plastic beverage bottles, other plastic bottles, caps and lids, and cap rings collected (2002 & 2005 are rain events)

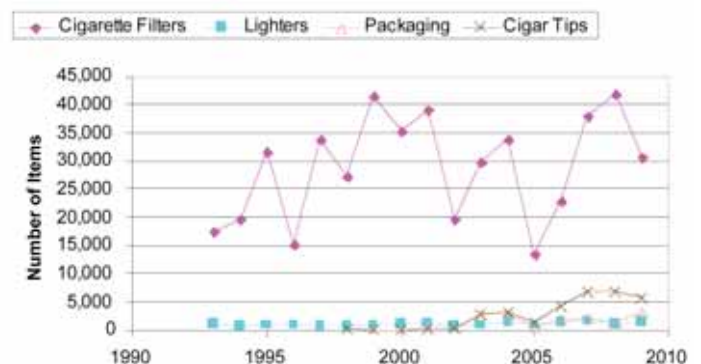


Plastic Foam Food Packaging. In the 1989 spring sweeps at Sandy Hook, 189 bags of polystyrene plastic foam were collected and shipped to McDonald's Corp in Illinois in protest. In the 1990's, the amount of foam used for fast food packaging was reduced and fewer containers were collected overall than in the 1980s.

Balloons. The number of balloons collected has increased. In the early sweeps, mylar balloons were rare compared to today and the numbers collected continue to increase.

Cigarettes and Related Items. Cigarette filters represent about 13% of the litter picked up on NJ beaches. The number of cigarettes collected during the sweeps has varied over time and seems to have generally increased (Figure 5). This is despite the large declines in cigarette use that have been documented nationally. In the mid-1960s, based on total cigarette use and population, nearly 4,000 cigarettes were consumed per person. According to the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, consumption has dropped from 2,445 cigarettes per person in 1996 to 1,691 in 2006. COA theorizes that with the smoking bans in NY in 2003 and in NJ in 2006, the increased amount of outdoor smoking has led to an increase in cigarette litter.

Figure 5. Cigarette filters, lighters, and packaging as well as cigar tips collected (2002 & 2005 are rain events)



Policy Trends



Stemming the Tide of Marine Debris

Legislation: Since the 1970's and the beginning of Beach Sweeps in the mid-1980's, there have been various legal efforts to control Marine Debris at all levels from International Treaties to local ordinances including:

- International Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution (MARPOL), 1973, with modification in 1978 and many subsequent amendments
- U.S. Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act (MPRSA), 1972, with amendment by the Ocean Dumping Ban Act in 1988
- U.S. Marine Plastic Pollution Research and Control Act (MPPRCA), 1987



End of pipe netting on a North Bergen, NJ, CSO ready to be changed out

- NJ Sewage Infrastructure Improvement Act, 1988
- U.S. EPA National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Stormwater Program, 1990
- U.S. Marine Debris Research, Prevention and Reduction Act, 2006
- Limits on smoking on beaches have been established beginning with Belmar in 2001, followed by Long

Branch, Seaside Heights, Avon and at Island Beach State Park. Fines average about \$300.

Despite these efforts, studies from around the world continue to report an increase in marine debris, especially plastics.

Additional Debris Reduction Efforts: In response to COA's beach sweeps and many garbage washups in the mid-1980s, NJ also began a program in 1989 called Clean Shores, funded by specialized license plates, which uses state inmate labor to remove debris from the coast. This program has removed millions of pounds of debris over the years. NJ has also installed and maintained floatable control devices, or netting, to capture debris from many CSOs. In a multi-government cooperation, the Floatable Action Plan and program has also been developed for the New York/New Jersey metropolitan region to capture and reduce floatables from New York Harbor to the ocean. Improvements in waste management and implementation of recycling programs in the region have also occurred.

Short Term Regional Regulatory Actions Needed to Reduce Marine Debris

- Enforcement of Existing Regulations: litter laws, recycling rules, stormwater permits and related ordinances, at-sea disposal restrictions and more. Laws already on the books need to be fully funded, implemented and enforced. Funds collected from fines for violations must be directed to reduce pollution.
- Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO) Reductions: NJ must increase green infrastructure efforts to reduce stormwater and NY must put floatable control devices on CSOs.
- Legislation to Reduce Pollution Sources, such as the proposed Statewide Ban on Smoking on Beaches/Public Parks
- Statewide Bans on Plastic Shopping Bags or 5¢ charge
- Add a Clean Shores Program for NY

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Beach Sweeps

Since

The Beach Sweeps is NJ's largest statewide environmental event.

78,885 volunteers

3,913,987 pieces of debris

Numbers are conservative because not all volunteers complete and return data cards.

Monmouth County Highlights

Sandy Hook- First cleanup held in 1985 with 75 volunteers and the Marine Academy of Science and Technology (MAST).

Sandy Hook- The band Indus entertains beach sweepers for years. At the 1992 Fall Sweeps, Al Gore, Christopher Reeves, and U.S. Senator Lautenberg joined 500 volunteers for the Sweeps. Before the cleanup, COA and representatives from other organizations briefed Gore and Reeves at a roundtable discussion on ocean issues.

Belmar - In 1996, Divers Two Dive Shop located in Avon- By-The-Sea, NJ, worked with COA to coordinate their first underwater cleanup of Shark River.

Sandy Hook- At the 1998 Spring Sweeps, Governor Christine Todd Whitman and about 100 of her administration staff joined 515 other volunteers.

Belmar - In May 2001, Mayor Pringle used COA's stats from the Sweeps to establish non-smoking sections on the beach.

Union Beach - After Beach Captain Fran Donnelly's grandson went to a Beach Sweep and saw the massive amount of garbage on the beach and the danger it posed in harming wildlife, young Peter frequently picked-up trash in the street and put it in his toy truck he was riding!

Port Monmouth- At the 2005 Fall Sweeps, members of Middletown North High School's SEARCH Club were overwhelmed by the slick of garbage covering the

beach. The volunteers filled 15 full bags of plastic beverage bottles and reported over 40 "sewage cakes," which resemble foam plastic, but are actually dense blobs of soap and grease that contain high levels of bacteria. The "cakes" result from combined sewers released during rain events.

Sandy Hook- At the 2009 Spring Sweeps, Ginger Tatem found a message in a bottle from a young Middletown school boy.

Aberdeen- In Spring 2009, Aberdeen's Cliffwood Beach joined the Sweeps and 40 volunteers filled an entire parking space with the trash. Beach Captain Frank Huza commented, "The fishing community showed incredible support" and came out in numbers to clean up.



Ocean County Highlights

Pt. Pleasant Beach - Jenkinson's Aquarium began participating in the Beach Sweeps in 1998 and gave free entry to Sweeps participants for several years. Jenkinson's Aquarium also hosts the Beach Captain training sessions every spring.

Tuckerton Creek- In 1999, with help from Rusty Draper, the first "Kayak Kleanup" was held and removed over 3 tons of debris from Tuckerton Creek.

Seaside Heights - The MATES students always do a wonderful job at this site. The Beach Captain got married on the day of a spring Beach Sweep: he led the Sweeps in the morning and was married that afternoon! Talk about commitment!



Seaside Park - Since 2003, the Coastal Jersey Parrothead group has led the Seaside Park site at Stockton Avenue and makes Beach Sweeps the social event of the year! They dress for the weather, of course, but in Jimmy Buffett island-style! They also party-it-up after the Sweeps at the Saw Mill to celebrate their hard work.

We need to end quickly the age of plastic trash! - Joseph Reynolds

Highlights:

1985



Ortley Beach - Beach Captain Cara Muscio brings her Girl Scout troops and does an educational activity (Enviroscape) as part of the day's activity. She also does other demonstrations showing how pollution harms wildlife. At the 2007 Spring Sweeps, Girl Scouts found a young seal underneath a condo. The seal was checked for injuries by a ranger from Island Beach State Park and a volunteer for the Marine Mammal Stranding Center. Fortunately, the seal made it to the ocean on its own.

Seaside Park- For the fall 2009 Beach Sweeps, Seaside Park Borough showed its support for the program by providing free parking to Beach Sweep volunteers. Thanks Seaside Park!

Atlantic County Highlights

Ventnor - During the 2000 Fall Sweeps, 51 volunteers collected over 5,600 items which included 2,471 cigarette filters, over 600 various plastic bags, and a Halloween costume. Sometimes it's a little scary what we find on the beach.

Atlantic City- During the 2000 Fall Sweeps, the entire Ocean Side Charter School in Atlantic City cleaned several miles of beach along their famous boardwalk. The 267 student, teachers, and chaperones collected nearly 6,000 items including a Miss America Pageant Parade boardwalk pass, a bag of grout, and a baseball bat.

Margate- In 2003, 600 local students hit the beach during the spring sweeps and collected nearly 2 tons of debris!

Oceanville - During the 2008 Fall Sweeps, 250 volunteers from the Forsythe Wildlife Refuge collected 1,250 approximately pounds of garbage.

Cape May County Highlights

Strathmere- In 1999, Congressman Frank LoBiondo joined Egg Harbor Township Police Pack 94 Cub Scouts and invited them to come to Washington, DC for a special tour of the White House. Later that summer, the scouts went to the White House and meet the President's Dog "Buddy".

Wildwood- At the 2003 Fall Sweeps, volunteers found themselves "in the money," finding \$110 dollars, and cleaned the widest beach in the state.

Cape May Point- In 2008, Cape May Point volunteers found a

sofa and reclining chair on the beach! This brings a whole other element to relaxing on the beach...

Sea Isle City- Residents not only collect beach debris, but also plant dune grass as part of their Fall Beach Sweeps program on "Make a Difference Day."

Statewide Highlights:

~Roster of the Ridiculous ~

2000 Sweeps: "Awash in Apparel" list included 137 shoes, 45 socks, 27 shirts, 18 hats & caps, 15 gloves, 13 underwear, 5 shorts & pants, 3 dryer sheets, 2 bras, 2 buttons, belt buckle, bow tie, night gown, pantyhose, sweater, and a dresser.

2001 Sweeps: "Beauty and the Beach" list included 90 combs, 66 Chap/lip sticks, 31 tooth brushes, 28 sun & eye glasses, 24 Hair Scrunchies, 8 Brushes, 5 Make-up Kits, 3 Bars of Soap, 3 Deodorant Containers, 3 Hair Curlers, 3 Mirrors, 3 Razors, 2 Tubes of toothpaste, Bottle of "Old Spice", Bottle of nail polish (full), Eye liner, floss Container, Hair Net, Hair Spray, Nail File, Tube of "Poli-grip."

Also in 2001, the United Nations declared "International Year of the Volunteer," and a huge turnout of 5,136 volunteers removed 243,475 pieces of debris at the Sweeps.

2002 Sweeps: "What was cooking on the Jersey Shore?" 388 Pieces of foil, 28 sponges, 12 metal forks/knives/spoons, 9 rags & washcloths, 4 plates, 4 Tupperware items, 2 cooking pots & bowls, 2 fly swatters, 2 glass bowls & vases, 2 milk crates, 2 place mats, 2 wooden spoons, box of "sweet & low", can opener, cheese spreader, chop sticks, coffee mug, dust pan, grill cover, jar of mayonnaise, meat thermometer, metal strainer, pastry form, salt/pepper shaker, soap dish, table cloth, table top, tea bag, and a wooden table.

~Ridiculously Dedicated~

2004 Sweeps: The record attendance of 6,656 volunteers removed a record 338,423 pieces of debris. The spring beach cleanup; alone, set a record of most volunteers for a single cleanup — **4,021 volunteers** – nearly equaling the total volunteers for both cleanups in previous years.

2005 Sweeps: Despite heavy rain and wind during both Spring & Fall Beach Sweeps events, **2,769** volunteers braved the weather at **89** locations in **50 municipalities**.



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The Monmouth County
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Clean Ocean Action staff and
volunteers for their dedication
to keeping New Jersey's beaches
and waterways clean.

*Congratulations on
Beach Sweeps 25!*

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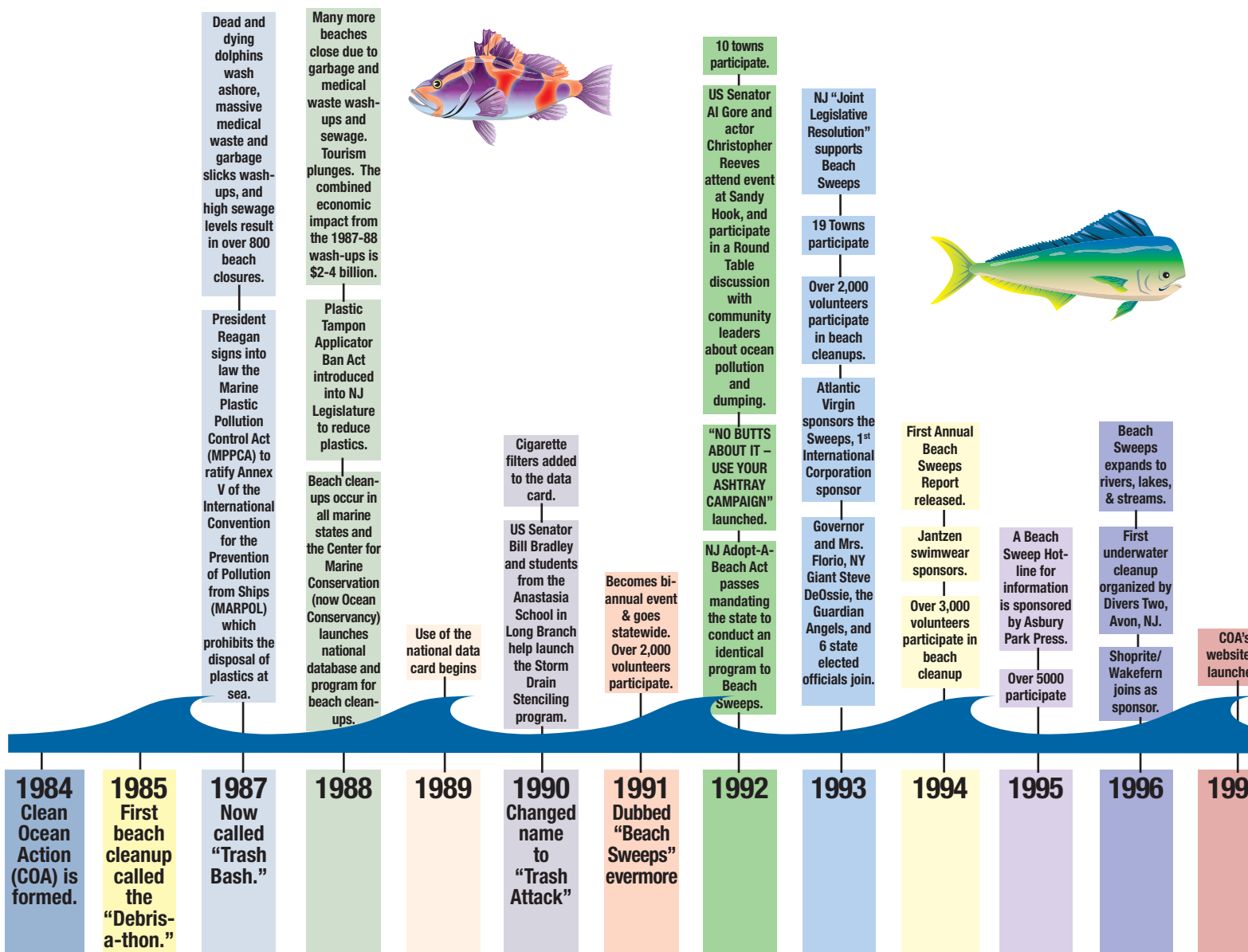
Lisa Sliwa and Guardian Angels join Sandy Hook Sweeps in 1993



Beach Sweeps

Clean Ocean Action's Beach Sweeps is one of the longest running cleanups in the world. The first event, called the Debris-a-thon was held in 1985 at Sandy Hook, NJ, with over

75 small and tall citizens. Over the years, the name of the event changed, including Trash Bash, and Trash Attack, before settling on Beach Sweeps.



BEACH SWEEPS 25!



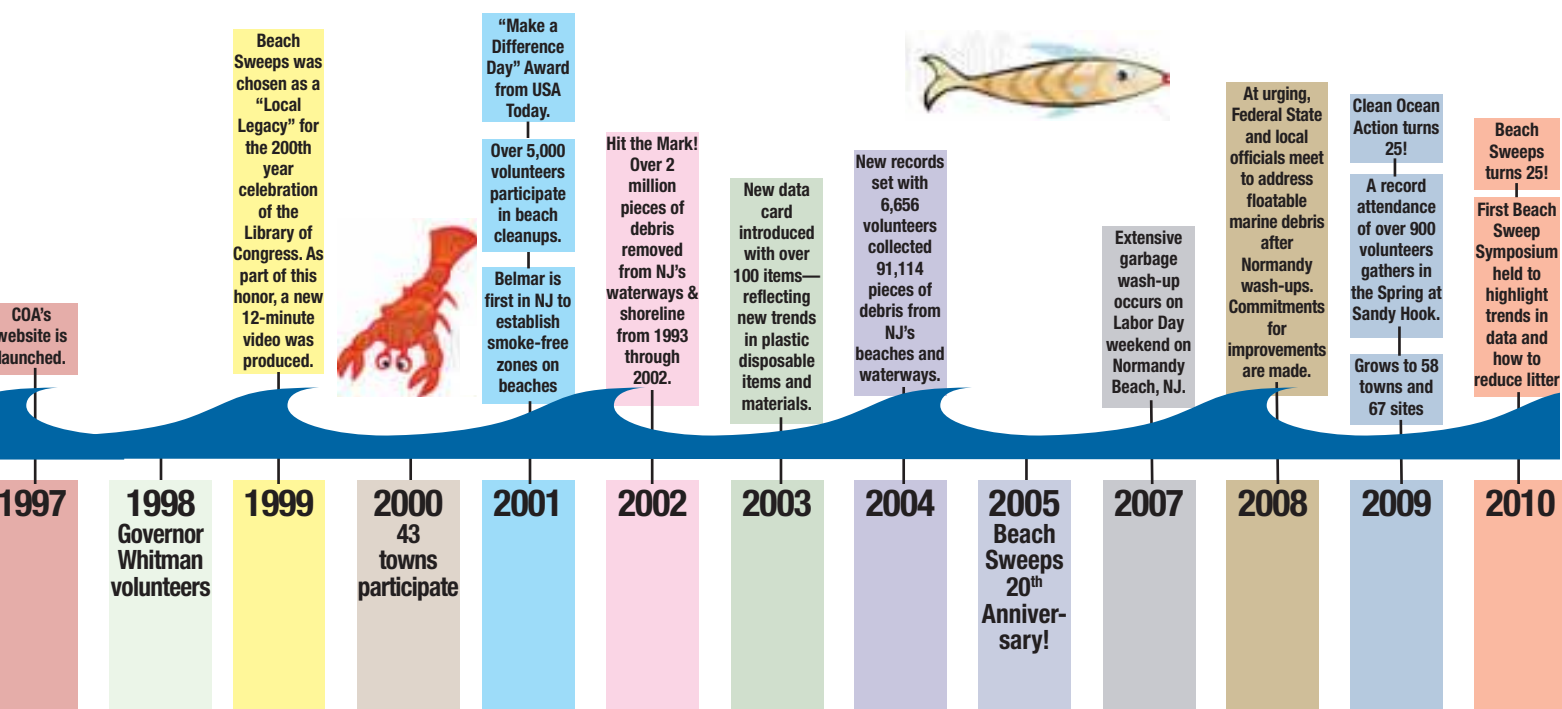
Beach Sweeps: A History

An important objective of the Beach Sweeps program is the volunteer-collected data. During a Beach Sweep all volunteers are instructed to collect trash as well as record everything they find on COA's data card. This information is compiled into an annual report and used to educate the public to advocate for pollution prevention initiatives and legislation. The Beach Sweeps Reports turn the one day event into a legacy of information. Throughout the years, the reports have been used to pass smoking bans, encourage recycling programs, and support plastic bag bans.

Today, the Beach Sweeps is New Jersey's largest statewide environmental event, involving approximately 60 towns, 70 sites and thousands of citizens. Indeed, Beach Sweepers now include three generations: parents, children

and their children. At the heart of the program are Beach Captains, volunteers that organize and manage the events at each individual site. Beach Captains direct all Beach Sweeps volunteers, make arrangements for trash/recycling pickup, and advertise in their areas.

From the beginning, the underlying goal of the Beach Sweeps program is to encourage "naturally clean" beaches, rather than just collect people's "pointless" pollution. Through the Beach Sweeps program, Clean Ocean Action strives to educate the public about the severity of the ongoing local marine debris problem. As our historical data indicates, more than 80% of the "junk" that washes-up on our beaches and waterways is plastic, year after year. Many volunteers are unaware of this trend until they participate in a Sweep and as a result are inspired to take further action, such as reducing their use of disposable plastics. Ultimately, if everyone can learn to reduce, reuse, and recycle, as well as dispose of their waste properly, we will be able to move toward a "naturally clean" beach and eliminate the need of the Beach Sweeps program.



Union Beach My Story *By Peter John Donnelly*

My first Beach Sweep was in the fall of 2003 in Keyport, I was 4 ½ years old. I could not understand why people left such a mess. Then I saw the dead bird all tangled in fishing string. Andy the Baykeeper tried to keep me away but the more he tried to keep me away the more I had to look. I was going to make sure this didn't happen to any other birds.

In Spring of 2004 my Gram became the Beach Captain of Union Beach. And together with the help of a lot of good people who came to help we did our best to clean the beach. My cousin Colin came for his first and last time. He picked up sewer cakes (raw sewerage) without gloves and got very sick.



Fall Beach Sweep 2004 my Gram made me her Co Captain. I felt very excited, I was 5 years old then. I didn't live in New Jersey, I lived in Pennsylvania with my Mom. And she would let me come to take part in Beach Sweeps. When I was in Pennsylvania and my Mom would take me to the store I would stop and pick up all the cigarette butts because I knew the birds could die if they ate them. It made my Mom crazy, so she called my Gram and told her, she told me not to pick anymore up until I got gloves. She gave me a bag full and I always kept them in my pocket for when I had to pick up garbage. Back to the sweeps, I went to pick the garbage and a dock was on shore yea that is right a dock. How did this happen a polluter that's how. There was ropes on it nets I don't like to see that. It made me sad. I was too little to move it.

Spring Beach Sweeps 2005

This was a cold rainy day. I found a dead bird, Mr. Andruzzi helped me put it in a bag. I guess I could not stop this from happening, too many people didn't care. But I wasn't going to give up.

In between Beach Sweeps there was a hurricane Katrina, a lot of people died and there was no one to take care of the animals. We can open the refrigerator to get food but animals can't. So my friends and I tried to

think of a way to help. We made bird feeders painted faces made cookies and did whatever we could think of to get some money to help. We had a flea market and sold our old toys and businesses gave us stuff to sell. We made \$1,456.00. One of the banks doubled the money if we sent it to the people so we sent \$1,000.00 and the bank made it \$2,000.00 for the people and \$456.00 for the animals.

Fall Beach Sweeps 2005

Another dock.

That was the year Freeholder Amy Handlin came and gave me an award. "I don't know why I got an award for doing something I should be doing." But it was nice of her to think of me. Did you ever think of what happens to the cigarettes people throw out their car window, or just drop on the floor? Sometimes I think people don't think about when they throw their cigarettes out the window of their car's where it's going. The cigarettes wind up in the ocean and beaches where they come to swim and fish. I don't think they would like it. How do you think the fish and birds feel? They live in the ocean and beaches.

Spring Beach Sweeps 2006

That was the year my Cub Scout troop came and helped. We got lots of heavy stuff because the Dads were there. There were needles and beach whistles and more sewer cakes. I don't know where they all come from, but sometimes it feels like we didn't ever clean the beach.

I also worked with my friends on "no pets left behind" and we got the law passed. So now when there is a hurricane they have to have a place for people's pets. I may be young, too young to do this stuff. But if I don't, what kind of future will I have? I choose to try to make it a good one.

Spring Beach Sweeps 2009

There were a lot of plastic bags, some were full of sand and were too heavy to pick up I tried.

Fall Beach Sweeps 2009

This was the first beach sweep I missed since I started. I had to go to see my Mom. But my friend Julie took my place. She comes with us all the time so I knew she would do a good job.

Well this is my story, I have spoken out when it matters and have quietly done what it takes to make this a better world. Remember everyone can make a difference no matter how small you are. There is a hero in all of us we just have to let it out.

The Sweeps In Keansburg

By Ann Commarato

Keansburg's beach sweeps continues to grow every year. A large part of our success has been the involvement of various sporting teams including one of our favorites (and biggest) Kean University Football Team. When they get off their bus, there is no mistaking they are football players! They are giving back to the community and community service is a big draw in the spring. Many children in the local schools are required to fulfill a certain amount of hours and what better way then on the beach!

I've come across many strange items over the years but the one that sticks in my mind was a jar with two homemade dolls in it, they were tied together with a ribbon and had a picture of a young couple in-between the dolls and a poem in another language.

Seaside Park, Stockton Street

By Grace Peck

Coastal Jersey Parrot head Club is proud to be part of Clean Ocean Action's continuing efforts to keep our beaches and coastlines clean. We have been active for over 7 years now with both the Spring and Fall beach sweeps as well as manning coast booths every summer up and down the coast. For those of you not familiar with our club, Parrot head's are fan's of Jimmy Buffett. With over 250 Parrot head club's in the United States and around the world, Parrot head's strive to make this world a little better than the way we found it. We volunteer, and a whole lot more. Parrot head clubs help with environmental groups, donate and raise money for animal shelters, food banks, cancer research, collect toy's for tot's program, you name it. If there's a worthwhile cause that needs help, chances are there's a Parrot head Club helping out. We can usually be found dressed in tropical attire attending parties and raising money.

We like to call it "Partying with a Purpose". If you like to have fun, check out a Parrothead club near you!!

For more info www.phip.com or our local chapter www.cjphc.org

Ortley Beach

By Cara Muscio

"The data collection aspect is critical to the success of the Clean Ocean Action Beach Sweeps. It isn't just getting people out for a day to pick up trash - citizens are getting involved in the scientific process, collecting important information, and making people think about the kinds and quantity of debris and where it comes from. This is a perfect lead in to talking about the kinds of pollution they can't see..."

TEEN HIGHLIGHTS

Sea Bright Public Beach

By Mark Woldseth

So for the 15 or so years it has been such a pleasure to see all the local kids grow up, coming each year to Sea Bright Public Beach and learn about how important it is to keep our waterways clean, and all the sea life that enjoys our waters.



Harley the dog watching kids from RCDS filling out their forms and eating donuts. 1996

It's amazing how quickly the years pass, I remember for years all the kids would come and play with my old dog Harley. The first sweep after she passed away, I bought her picture, and it was so good to hear everyone saying what a good dog she was. Now I bring my new dog Bindie, she's a bit wilder than the old one, but still loves to help the kids drag driftwood up the beach.



My son Cash with a life guard board we found washed up on the beach, I hope the life guard fared better than the board.

Over the years for the sweeps, I have had anything from over 250 people on a nice day to nobody on a gale force wind with rain blowing side ways. On those rainy sweeps Harley and me sat under this tarp I had set up, looking like two drowned rats. It has been a great pleasure to be Sea Bright Public Beach Captain.

Lavallette

By Anita Zalom

We all consider the Beach as our greatest resource and attraction. How can we help to keep it clean and healthy for years to come? By taking part in any activity dedicated to that purpose and by joining forces with organizations and individuals that work towards this same goal. We in Lavallette are committed and we ask anyone to come join us at our exciting Sweeps! Community members, neighbors, and even folks from up North who come enjoy our shores each summer find the time to join forces and work together in the Fall and the spring. Our School children are dedicated to this purpose and they and their teachers are always part of our Sweeps.

I AM SO PROUD TO TAKE PART AND TO BE OUR BOROUGH'S BEACH CAPTAIN FOR THE LAST 10 YEARS. Thanks for the opportunity to help!!!

Point Pleasant Beach (Jenkinson's)

By Danni Logue

This will be our fifth year participating in Clean Ocean Action's Beach Sweeps. (It may have been longer, but that's the paperwork I have.) It makes perfect sense for us to support and participate in beach sweeps. Not only are we located on the boardwalk, but we provide a variety of education about the health of our waterways.

We commit to the beach sweeps every April and October. We also provide a place for the beach captains to have their yearly meeting in anticipation for the first sweeps.

We have had people from all over New Jersey and Pennsylvania. It's amazing to me how all people join together to clean up our waterways on those two designated days. Families, school groups, religious groups, social groups, and last year we had two environmental groups from Delaware Valley College!

Although I don't have any funny stories or peculiar items to report, I am always amazed by the number of cigarette butts, plastic bags, and plastic bottles that are still collected at our site. I hope someday these items will be considered the "peculiar items" and not the norm.

Congratulations Clean Ocean Action on 25 years of Beach Sweeps! Thank you for all you do and for letting us be a part of it!

Seaside Heights (Bayside) Sweeps 2008 New Site, New sponsor!

By Danielle Russell

Beach Sweeps 2008 was held on Saturday, April 26, 2008. I was Ocean County's organizer for New Jersey Community Water Watch at the time as well as COA's Beach Captain for one of the site locations in Seaside Heights.

Due to the joint efforts of myself, NJCWW, and fellow community members, a new site and sponsor was formed. This new site is located by the bayside boat launch along Rt 35 South. It was Sponsored by J. Knipper and Co.

I was so honored to start this great tradition! COA and NJCWW brought together our local community to build awareness and inspire accountability. This is one of the major reasons I chose to be involved with NJCWW and why I continue to be involved with our community. New Jersey waterways have serious problems, but we can work together on the solutions.



Wildwood Beach Sweeps Review

By Jessica Westerland

When people think about Wildwood, most people picture the boardwalk, free beaches, and the night life. The one thing people don't realize is that as wonderful as the boardwalk is, its close proximity to the beach also means a lot more trash and debris end up on the sands and in the water. For this reason, the Wildwood beach sweep is especially important, so we can help keep the beaches clean for many more great memories to be made.

I am so excited and happy to be the captain of the Wildwood Beach Sweep site. I love seeing and talking with all the volunteers that come out and help. Wildwood has a large population in the summer, but during the rest of the seasons there are mostly only locals on the island. To see groups of locals come out to help their home, to help keep the environment that they enjoy everyday clean, makes me really proud.

This past fall, out of the 94 different items listed on the trash item score cards, only 8 items were not found on our beach. It is shocking to realize how many different types of trash are found just within several blocks. When you think about how many different ways that trash can harm the balance of the sea and the creatures within it, it really lends a sense of importance to picking up trash off of the beach.

It truly is the volunteers that make the beach sweep successful, and I am so thankful for everyone that comes out and helps keep Wildwood's beaches beautiful and safe for marine life!

Corson's Inlet An Appreciative Feathered Friend

By Andrew Oster

At the Fall 2009 Beach Sweeps, my father was cleaning up Corson's Inlet State Park in Ocean City with his club the Ocean City High School Student Environmental Association. When he came back to drop his data cards off, he had an interesting story to tell. He came across a Herring Gull whose head and wings were entangled in monofilament fishing line. He untangled the bird, and just as the gull was about to fly away, he shot my dad a "look of appreciation", and off he went into the blue sky. If it weren't for the work that COA does in New Jersey, this feathered friend and many other of our coastal creatures would be tangled in more than fishing line.



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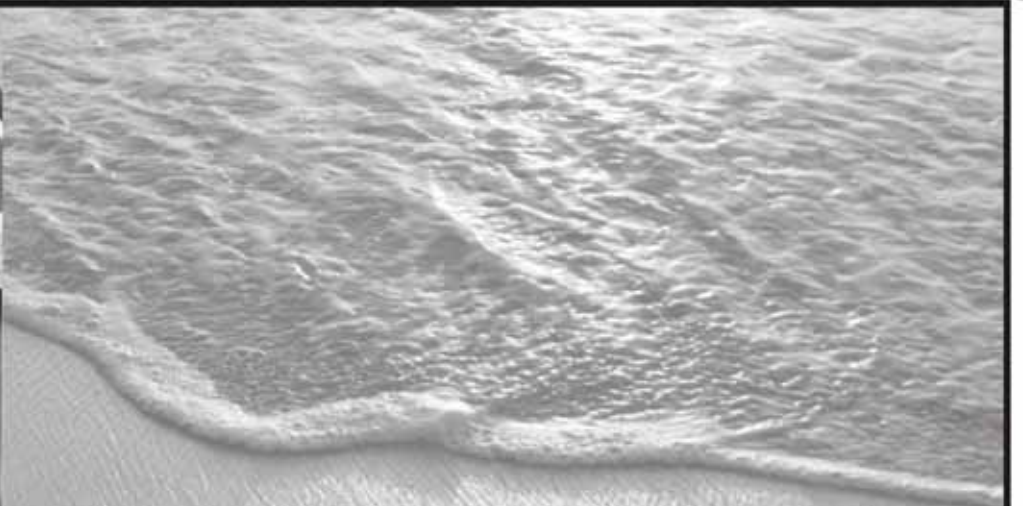
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Beach Sweeps Symposium Awards

Clean Ocean Action (COA) is honored to celebrate the efforts of our dedicated volunteers and generous contributors. Thanks to COA's *Ocean Guardians*, leaders in the business community, the Beach Sweeps program continues to inspire us all to make a clean sweep of beaches and waterways across the NY/NJ region.



"Each day we provide our customers with the meals they need to nourish their families and celebrate and keep the traditions they cherish.

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Karen Meleta
Vice President, Consumer & Corporate Communications

Wakefern Food Corporation/ ShopRite Stores A Firm Commitment to Community

For 14 years, Wakefern Food Corporation, the largest retailer-owned cooperative in the United States, has supported COA's Statewide Beach Sweeps with generous donations of resources and volunteers. They are the longest sustaining corporate supporter of the sweeps.

Wakefern has demonstrated a true commitment to the long-term protection of the environment for more than 30 years. Environmentally-focused initiatives include recycling programs for items such as grocery bags, plastic film and pharmacy stock bottles; at-retail Bag Re-Use Programs; Education Programs; and Conservation Partnerships.

Wakefern perseveres in this commitment by implementing a sustainability strategy for the company that focuses on making a positive and lasting impact on the environment and the communities it serves.

Aveda Finding Solutions to Pollution

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Plastic caps often end up as litter or trash and migrate into our rivers and oceans. Birds and other marine creatures mistake them for food with tragic results. The magnitude of this pollution is devastating to our oceans and wildlife.

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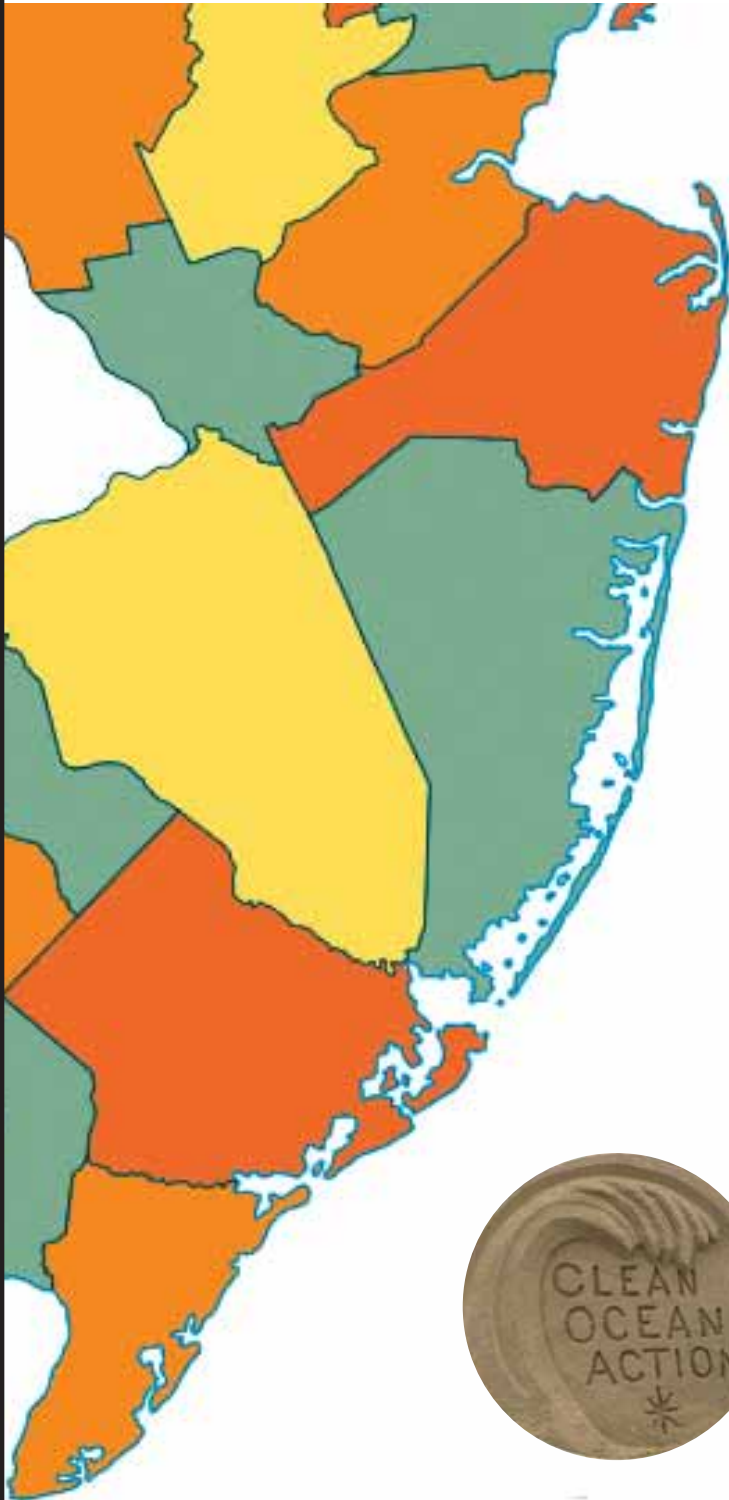
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