



MISSISSIPPI COASTAL CLEANUP PROGRAM

2023 FALL NEWSLETTER

Hi there! Welcome to the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup Program Seasonal Newsletter.

The Mississippi Coastal Cleanup Program (MSCCP) is an educational program that promotes the conservation of our local marine environment by influencing active stewardship within our community. This program is housed at the Mississippi State University's Coastal Research and Extension Center in Biloxi, MS.

Check out what we've been up to!

NEW BEGINNINGS!

There's a lot that goes on behind the scenes when it comes to planning a beach cleanup event. From preparing supplies to ensuring all collected trash is disposed of properly, and all the emailing in between - we couldn't do it with our Program Coordinator, Mandy! Mandy has hosted and facilitated over 100 cleanups that included over 13 thousand volunteers.



After 6 years of being the Coordinator for the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup Program, Mandy will be transitioning into different job duties at the MSU Coastal Research and Extension Center. We appreciate all your hard work and can't wait to see what you accomplish in your new roles!

See you around, Mandy!

I have really enjoyed my time as MSCCP Program Coordinator and seeing this program grow from a single cleanup into a large, robust education and stewardship program. It has been really inspiring to be around such hard-working volunteers during each cleanup event.

2023 Monthly cleanups conclude

This year's Monthly Cleanups initiative concluded in September at the harbor in Long Beach. Over 100 volunteers, including the Long Beach Fire Department, picked up over four thousand pieces of trash, most of which consisted of cigarette butts.

Throughout the year, volunteers stay involved by coming out one Saturday morning each month to participate in a beach cleanup at various locations across the coast. We had a wonderful year with a total of **522 volunteers** picking up an estimated **21,835 pieces of trash**, filling over **120 bags** which was equivalent to **over 1,350 pounds!**



TRICKY TRASH

Trunk or Treat

The **Mississippi Inland Cleanup Program** held its 2nd Annual “Tricky Trash Halloween Bash” in October. At its new location in Hill Park (Biloxi, MS) **41** volunteers were able to remove 22 pounds of litter! Participants assisted the cleanup crew with a quick sweep of the park before partaking in some trunk-or-treating fun. Thanks to the **USM Marine Education Center, Mississippi Aquarium, Osprey Initiative, and Plastic Free Gulf Coast** for their participation as well, providing the event with their decorated outreach trunks!

Winners for this year’s event are:

- Best Costume (Adult): Cody (Surf’s Up)
- Best Costume (Child): TV Man
- Best Decorated Trunk: USM Marine Education Center
- Most Sustainable Swag: Osprey Initiative
- Spookiest Item Found: The Sparks Family
- Most Trash Collected: The Dozier Family



Follow the MSICP on social media to keep up to date on future events, or visit nolittermovement.com for more!



Change your habits, protect the environment with SWAPS

Sustainability With Awareness & Prevention Solutions

We have had a busy year with teaching at three local high schools, Pass Christian, St. Martin, and Ocean Springs High School. **SWAPS** has been involved in **37 events and classes**, reaching over **2,500 people** of all ages and backgrounds. This includes Jackson County Sand Jam, Pass Christian Library plastic alternative DIY workshops, Pascagoula River Audubon Center Summer Camps, Hummingbird Festival, homeschool classes in multiple counties, and more!

SWAPS is a four-module learning series that provides students with a broad understanding of litter and excessive waste issues faced by individuals, schools, and communities on the coast. The goal of the **SWAPS** program is for students to take the lessons learned and share this knowledge with their families, friends, and community.

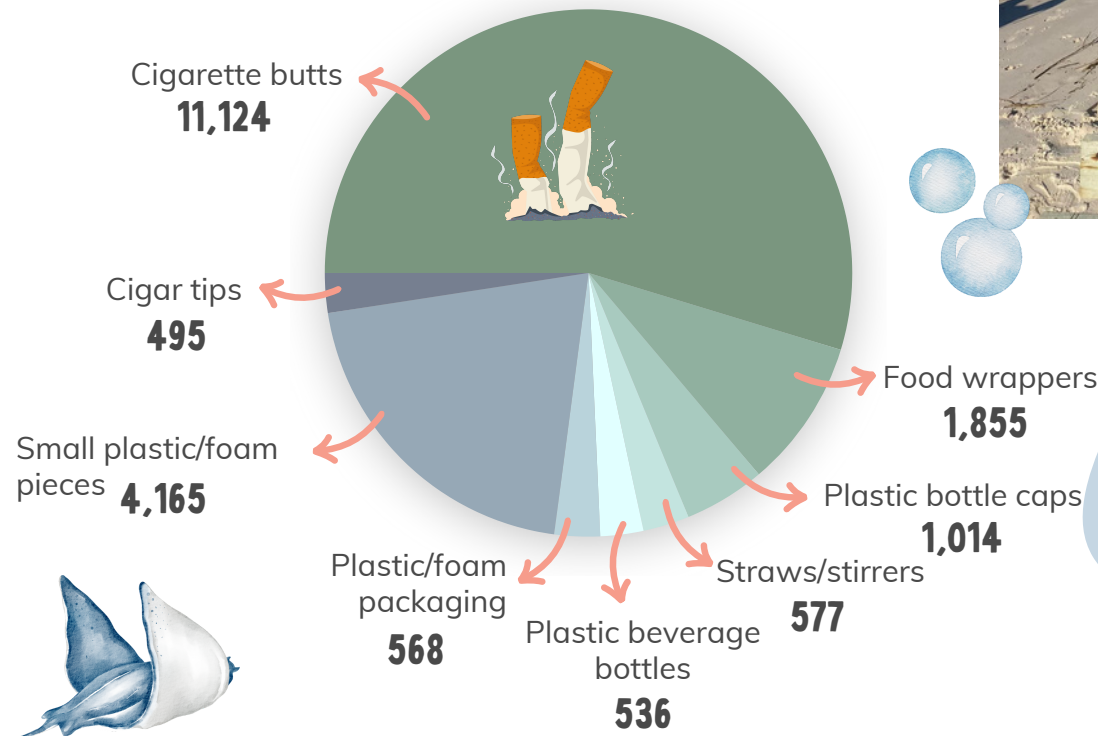
Everyone can take part in making their communities better by preventing litter and excess waste! **SWAPS** is here to provide education and materials to help you succeed. For more information or to schedule workshops and classes please contact Elizabeth at e.engebretson@msstate.edu.

2023 ANNUAL MISSISSIPPI COASTAL CLEANUP

Let's give a round of applause to our 590 fantastic volunteers who helped pull off a spectacular feat at the 2023 Annual Mississippi Coastal Cleanup event! A whopping **1,496 pounds of litter** was cleared from our beautiful beaches of the MS Gulf Coast.

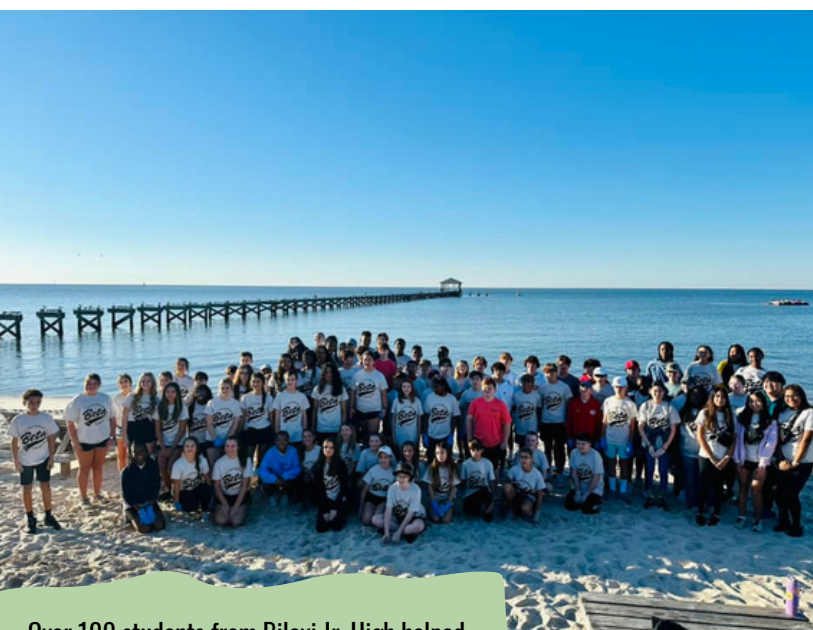
During the event, volunteers checked in at predesignated locations on the coast where a Site Captain provided cleanup supplies. Of the **27,621 items collected**, cigarette butts were the most frequently discovered item with a grand total of 11,124 butts collected and removed from the beaches.

TOP ITEMS FOUND:



DID YOU KNOW?

Over 85% of the trash collected during beach cleanups is single-use plastic. Most of these items such as plastic grocery bags and beverage bottles can be easily replaced with sustainable, reusable items.



Over 100 students from Biloxi Jr. High helped clean the beach at the Biloxi Lighthouse!

This event included multiple cleanup locations from Pascagoula Beach in Jackson County all the way to Waveland Beach in Hancock County. Groups from across the coast and beyond traveled to participate in this event collecting data on what type and how much trash was collected. Groups included Jackson County 4-H, Growth and Beautification Long Beach, Keesler Air Force Base, BGC Care Takers, Sumrall High School, Rotary Club of Gulfport Sunset, Northrop Grumman Aerospace, and so many more! The Biloxi Lighthouse had the highest number of participants including students from Biloxi Jr. High.

2023 ANNUAL MISSISSIPPI COASTAL CLEANUP



Volunteers received a t-shirt for their participation and the chance to enter into a raffle! Each location had a goodie bag that was raffled at the conclusion of the event containing donated goodies and swag from our sponsor **Rae Rae the Science Bae** and partners including **SWAPS** and the **MS Inland Cleanup Program**. All raffle entries were later combined to pull names for the grand prizes that included a kayak and yeti cooler. *Congrats to the winners!*

All data from this event is submitted to the Ocean Conservancy as part of their International Coastal Cleanup efforts.

Huge thank you to our sponsors and partners who help make this event possible!

2023 TOP SPONSORS

NOAA Marine Debris Program, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant, Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, Chevron Pascagoula Refinery, Ocean Conservancy, & Rae Rae the Science Bae.





**TIME TO
UPDATE**

The MSCCP will be going through a program *glow-up* for 2024. As the program expands to include various initiatives (SWAPS, MS Inland Cleanup, Derelict Trap & Boat Removals), we are taking some time to revamp our volunteer efforts. Our team is working on new and improved ways to get volunteers involved with meaningful environmental stewardship.

We appreciate your patience while we navigate the coordination of volunteer efforts in the new year!

For any MSCCP inquiries, please contact the Program Lead, Dr. Eric Sparks.
eric.sparks@msstate.edu

STAY TUNED FOR OUR 2023 MSCCP ANNUAL REPORT!

This report includes all of the work we have accomplished throughout the year.

[CHECK OUR PREVIOUS REPORTS HERE!](#)

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www.mscoastalcleanup.org

