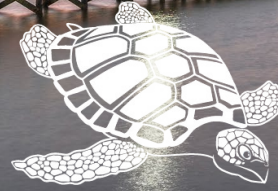




MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
EXTENSION



Mississippi Coastal Cleanup

Thousands of volunteers came together for the annual **Mississippi Coastal Cleanup** event on the morning of Saturday, November 16, 2019, to rid our coastline, beaches, and bays of marine debris. More than **40 cleanup sites** spanned the coastal counties—Jackson, Harrison, and Hancock—covering **34.7 miles** of the coastal region. Volunteers filled **1,147 bags** with trash, resulting in **22,481 pounds** of trash being removed—that's 11 tons of trash! Additionally, the **1,566 volunteers** helped collect data that will be used to categorize the major sources of marine debris entering the coastal environment. A detailed summary of the trash collected is shown in Table 1. This data will be submitted to Ocean Conservancy to be a part of the International Coastal Cleanup data pool (<https://oceanconservancy.org/trash-free-seas/international-coastal-cleanup/map/>).

Marine debris is defined as any manmade material that is intentionally or unintentionally, directly or indirectly disposed of or abandoned into our marine environment, according to the NOAA Marine Debris Program. Marine debris is composed of an array of items, from everyday items we toss in the trash (food wrappers, product packaging, beverage bottles, etc.) and litter on sidewalks, parking lots, and streets that is washed or blown away by Gulf winds, to even larger objects, such as fishing nets, construction materials, and derelict boats.

Single-use plastic items were the most common materials collected. Some of the commonly found trash items included cigarette butts, food wrappers, plastic beverage bottles, and plastic bottle caps. These materials can be extremely harmful to wildlife on land, in the air, and in the water. When out in the environment for long periods of time, these items can break up into smaller pieces that wildlife can mistake for food, leading to the introduction of plastic into the marine food web. Volunteers found many small pieces of trash and plastic during the **Mississippi Coastal Cleanup** event: **25,222 plastic**, **11,208 foam**, and **9,887 glass pieces**.



In each county after the cleanup, volunteers received a complimentary lunch, a **Mississippi Coastal Cleanup** event volunteer T-shirt, and a chance to win prizes in a raffle. In Jackson County, The Shed Barbeque provided lunch for nearly **300 volunteers** at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College's Estuarine Education Center. In Hancock County, lunch was provided to more

than **60 volunteers** at the Mississippi State University Extension office in Bay St. Louis, and in Harrison County, Domino's provided pizzas to more than **120 volunteers** at the South Beach Biloxi event pavilion. During the Harrison County lunch, MSU's Marine Fisheries Ecology Lab, the Mississippi Aquarium, and Audubon Mississippi set up booths to engage with the community and share their organizations' efforts.

The **Mississippi Coastal Cleanup** event is one component of the **Mississippi Coastal Cleanup** Program. Its mission is preventing and removing litter from the coastal environment through education, outreach, research, and cleanup events. In addition to the large-scale cleanups, the **Mississippi Coastal Cleanup** Program holds monthly, small-scale beach cleanups, citizen-scientist microplastic monitoring, and in-class presentations and educational booths at multiple events throughout the year.

The **Mississippi Coastal Cleanup** Program would not be possible without the support of our sponsors. We would like to thank and recognize **Chevron Pascagoula Refinery | Waste Management | The Shed Barbeque & Blues Joint | Mississippi Department of Marine Resources | Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality | Harrison County Beautification Commission Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium | NOAA | South Beach Biloxi Hotel and Suites | MGCCC Estuarine Education Center | Ocean Conservancy | Domino's Pizza | Chemours | Mississippi Aquarium | MSU Marine Fisheries and Ecology | Audubon Mississippi | and Ship Island Excursions.**



Stay involved with us year-round by participating in a cleanup from January to September as part of the Monthly Cleanup initiative! Visit <http://coastalcleanup.extension.msstate.edu> for dates and locations.

Mark your calendars!

**The Star-Spangled Cleanup will be
Sunday, July 5, 2020.**

**The 2020 Mississippi Coastal Cleanup will be
Saturday, October 17.**

If you are interested in volunteering, sponsoring, or learning more about cleaning up the coast, please visit <http://coastalcleanup.extension.msstate.edu>.

Table 1. Marine debris collected during the 2019 Mississippi Coastal Cleanup.

CLEANUP SUMMARY

Number of trash bags filled	1,147
Weight of trash collected (pounds)	22,481
Distance cleaned (miles)	34.7
Number of volunteers	1,566

COMMONLY FOUND ITEMS TOTAL #

Cigarette butts	54,349
Food wrappers	15,627
Take-out containers (plastic)	4,360
Take-out containers (foam)	3,511
Bottle caps (plastic)	8,328
Bottle caps (metal)	3,901
Lids (plastic)	4,281
Straws/stirrers	4,218
Forks, knives, and spoons	2,994

PACKAGING MATERIALS TOTAL #

6-pack holders	619
Strapping bands	547
Tobacco packaging/wrap	2,369
Other plastic/foam packaging	4,384
Other plastic bottles (oil, bleach, etc.)	849

FISHING GEAR TOTAL #

Fishing buoys, pots, and traps	327
Fishing net and pieces	696
Fishing line (1 yard = 1 piece)	1,354
Rope (1 yard = 1 piece)	739

TINY TRASH TOTAL #

Foam pieces	11,208
Glass pieces	9,887
Plastic pieces	25,222

COMMONLY FOUND ITEMS TOTAL #

Beverage bottles (plastic)	14,862
Beverage bottles (glass)	6,636
Beverage cans	8,737
Grocery bags (plastic)	5,339
Other plastic bags	4,687
Paper bags	2,703
Cups and plates (paper)	2,034
Cups and plates (plastic)	2,388
Cups and plates (foam)	3,740

PERSONAL HYGIENE TOTAL #

Condoms	347
Diapers	121
Syringes	221
Tampons/tampon applicators	144

OTHER TRASH TOTAL #

Appliances (refrigerators, washers, etc.)	200
Balloons	329
Cigar tips	3,189
Cigarette lighters	507
Construction materials	3,252
Fireworks	402
Tires	699



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