



MISSISSIPPI  
COASTAL CLEANUP  
PROGRAM

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## 2026 SPRING 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!

# REQUEST A BIN

**Can't make it to one of our scheduled events?**

The MSCCP can provide groups with guidance and all the supplies they need to **perform their very own cleanup**. *Our only requirement - volunteers must collect data!* We do this at each of our cleanup events and we want to know how much and what types of trash you are picking up. Supplies provided include gloves, trash bags, trash grabbers, buckets, a first aid kit, hand sanitizer, hanging scale, and data collection materials.

So far in 2026, **263 Request a Bin volunteers** have collected over **513 lbs. of litter** in Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson Counties.



[REQUEST A BIN INFO](#)

# Outreach Events

## BILOXI STEM NIGHT

MSCCP staff had a great time at Biloxi School District's STEM Night in February, where we spoke with families about the important work we do. Students had the opportunity to see themselves in infrared using one of our drones and to play our Fishing with Trash game, which simulates fishing in polluted waters. Thank you to all of the families that came out and to Biloxi School District for having us.



## MY TWO BOOTS

We had a great time at the annual My Two Boots event at Gautier High School!

Fifth-grade students from across the district spent the day connecting with local environmental organizations. Throughout the day, students explored topics like fire ecology, watersheds, plant identification, litter in our environment, and even experienced Gyo-taku—the traditional Japanese art of fish printing!

MSCCP and NOAA led a station where students learned about the harms of marine debris and played the Fishing With Trash game.

A big thank you to the Pascagoula Gautier School District and all of the partners who make this engaging and impactful event possible each year!



# DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

MSCCP Coordinator, Evelyn McQueen, had the honor of presenting to the Daughters of the American Revolution Biloxi Chapter. Attendees learned all about microplastics, from manufacture and breakdown to chemical, biological, and environmental effects. The group was highly engaged in a thoughtful discussion about different ways we can each take steps to reduce our use of plastics!



## Introducing

## STEWARDSHIP AND OUTREACH ASSISTANT KAYLIN BRUENING

Kaylin joins the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup Program in addition to the Mississippi Sound Estuary Program as the Stewardship and Outreach Assistant. For the past year, she has been part of MSU's Coastal Conservation and Restoration, supporting coastal restoration efforts by growing marsh grasses through the Native Plant Producer Network and by promoting the use of native plants in home and community landscapes. With previous experience under the National Audubon Society and National Park Service, she now also serves as the state coordinator for the Great Southeastern Pollinator Census. Through her work in conservation, she enjoys documenting the beauty of the area to encourage others to get involved in its protection.





# WATERSHED CLEANUP

## MISSISSIPPI STATE STUDENT CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

With the help of MSU and Starkville volunteers, the Mississippi State Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society managed to collect a heaping **1,152 lbs of trash from 9 miles of drainage area**. This area was spread across 5 sites, focusing on **2 total watersheds**. The total amount of trash collected this year was on par with the previous two years. This year, **45 volunteers** attended from several different organizations, allowing us to expand our range and clean new areas. These included, but were not limited to, WAVMA, WFA Faculty, Students for a Sustainable Campus, WFA Graduate Student Association, and Keep Starkville Beautiful. By representing your organizations and coming together to pick up trash, we were able to achieve so much in just 2 short hours. It was incredible to see so many people dedicated to improving their community and their environment.

Among the total **31 bags of trash collected**, there were **363 cigarette butts, 493 food wrappers, 203 to-go food containers (plastic and foam), 173 cups and plates (paper/plastic/foam), and 353 plastic bags**, among other copious amounts of different trash types. One of the most common trash items found were beverage bottles. There were **744 total bottles (52% being plastic, 33% being cans, 15% being glass)** collected. Among the pollution that measured less than 2.5cm in diameter, a total of **378 pieces of plastic, 165 pieces of foam, 174 pieces of glass, and 130 pieces of paper** were collected. Some other interesting items included **78 construction materials, 14 diapers, a vintage television, and 3 fireworks.**



### MOST COMMON ITEMS ACROSS ALL WATERSHEDS:

- FOOD WRAPPERS- 493
- PLASTIC BAGS- 478 (352 BEING GROCERY BAGS)
- PLASTIC BEVERAGE BOTTLES- 386
- PLASTIC PIECES LESS THAN 2.5CM IN DIAMETER- 378
- CIGARETTE BUTTS- 363
- BEVERAGE CANS- 249
- GLASS PIECES LESS THAN 2.5CM IN DIAMETER- 174
- FOAM PIECES LESS THAN 2.5CM IN DIAMETER- 165

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Here are our upcoming scheduled events. All events will have online registration that volunteers must fill out prior to attending.

- **Sand Jam Cleanup**  
May 30<sup>th</sup> 2026 | Pascagoula Beach Park
- **Star-Spangled Cleanup**  
July 11<sup>th</sup> 2026 | Locations across the MS Gulf Coast
- **Annual Mississippi Coastal Cleanup Event**  
October 17<sup>th</sup> 2026 | Locations across the MS Gulf Coast

\*\* Please note, weather happens! Therefore, all events are subject to cancellation.



[EVENT CALENDAR](#)



*See you at the beach!*



*Did you know?*

In 2025, our volunteers helped protect over 1,110 ocean animals according to the Ocean Conservancy's Wildlife Impact Calculator!

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THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS!

